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The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "The advancement of women through and in the programmes of the United Nations system: What happens after the Fourth World Conference on Women?" (JIU/REP/95/5).

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THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH AND IN THE PROGRAMMES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM: WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN?

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ACRONYMS

ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
ACC	Administrative Committee on Co-ordination
CCAQ	Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DAW	Division for the Advancement of Women, United Nations
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMO	International Maritime Organization
INSTRAW	United Nations Institute for Training and Research for Women
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JCGP	Joint Consultative Group on Policy
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
NGLS	United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OHRM	Office of Human Resources Management, United Nations
UNCHS (Habitat)	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Office of the
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UPU	Universal Postal Union
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the 1970s the United Nations system has held an extensive series of global conferences to discuss major economic and social issues and develop strategies and action plans for dealing with them. The most often repeated of these conferences have been on the advancement of women, first in Mexico City in 1975, then in Copenhagen in 1980, and again in Nairobi in 1985. In September 1995 the Fourth World Conference on Women will be held in Beijing.

The principle of the equal rights of men and women was established in the preamble of the United Nations Charter 50 years ago, and is now a principle of international law. It has been specifically and consistently pursued in a series of subsequent General Assembly resolutions and literally hundreds of other legislative instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979, and in many meetings, projects and other activities. Some significant advances have been made in Member States and internationally. Unfortunately, however, the barriers to equal treatment and opportunity for women are both high and solid, and overall progress has been slow.

Much is again being said, planned, and written about women's progress or lack of progress in advance of the Beijing meeting. This JIU study, however, focuses on an aspect that as yet has received little specific attention: better future management of the System's substantive programmes for women's advancement, and to improve women's status within the System. Much past attention has been given to policy statements, longer-term system-wide planning and programming, and start-up activities. A stronger managerial focus on programme results and impact is now urgently needed at all levels.

Two decades of United Nations system action programmes have indeed produced some significant results. However, the process of transforming organizational cultures which is required to incorporate women's and gender perspectives, issues, and actions in all System programmes is a painfully slow and complex one.

In this area the past can truly be prologue. Only now, after 20 years of hard-earned experience, are the knowledge and processes needed for effective substantive programmes for women, and to improve the status of women staff, falling into place.

- Awareness and support from governing bodies and executive heads throughout the System, while unsure and uneven, is still stronger than it has ever been.
- Techniques of gender analysis and training, perspectives and techniques for improving women's recruitment and advancement, and substantive and cooperative inter-agency processes are largely available and are beginning to be widely used.
- The United Nations system increasingly emphasizes popular participation in development, good human resources management, and accountability for results - all of which encourage and facilitate more effective women's and gender programmes.

The United Nations system can and should play a leading and catalytic role in helping the female half of the world's population realize its potentials and contribute fully to global society. For this to happen, however, the organizations and the System as a whole must

manage and hopefully increase their very limited resources for women's and gender programmes in a much more systematic way.

After the Fourth World Conference on Women ends, the System could settle back into a routine of policy statements and women's "activities." Alternatively, however, the organizations can seize this opportunity to decisively mobilize their governing bodies, executive heads, women's programmes, personnel departments, programme managers, staff and staff groups, and inter-agency mechanisms.

Working together, these groups can ensure a much more strategic, responsive, and well-managed set of organizational and United Nations system women's and gender programmes, with an overriding emphasis on pragmatic actions and results in three interrelated areas.

Substantive programmes of the United Nations system: These programmes attempt both to "mainstream" gender perspectives and issues and to "target" specific issues for women in all programmes of the System. Recently, their potential has been strengthened by new emphases in the System on participative programmes, women's roles and rights, and firm accountability for programme results. Women's and gender programmes have made some significant system-wide progress during the past two decades but they are still very seriously hampered by feeble resource commitments and many obstructive bureaucratic tactics. They do, however, benefit from support provided by many other groups interested in serious and effective women's programmes. Most importantly, they have now almost reached the stage of "critical mass" needed to establish gender consciousness and issues in substantive programmes and organizational cultures throughout the United Nations system (paragraphs 7-46).

RECOMMENDATION 1: The executive heads of organizations of the United Nations system, individually and collectively, should take the following actions to make their substantive women's/gender programmes more effective in the future:

(a) identify a systematic framework of substantive gender programme issues and needs in each organization, and report to governing bodies on a sound action plan to deal with them (paragraphs 47-56);

(b) adapt existing material and assess past experience to provide essential gender training for staff in each organization (paragraphs 57-60);

(c) streamline existing system-wide programming processes and sharpen their focus on implementation and results (paragraphs 61-64);

(d) regularize the annual ad hoc inter-agency meetings on women's programmes as an irreplaceable mechanism for effective system-wide cooperation for women's advancement (paragraphs 65-69);

(e) assess present System-wide and individual organization staffing and funds for women's advancement programmes, to determine their adequacy and seek to increase them in the future (paragraphs 70-74);

(f) actively seek out significant new areas for programme breakthroughs, as already achieved by the excellent and influential inter-agency work done on gender statistics (paragraphs 75-83);

(g) increase emphasis on information outreach to women's groups worldwide, both through publications and new information technology, in collaborative and "user-friendly" ways (paragraphs 84-93);

(h) find ways to more consistently interact with the dynamism and worldwide reach of women's and other non-governmental organizations to advance, implement, and monitor progress in substantive women's programmes (paragraphs 94-99);

(i) with the help of the Commission on the Status of Women, ensure that governing bodies periodically assess progress in and encourage actions to ensure effective, organization-wide women's and gender programmes, and consider establishing special groups to facilitate this process (paragraphs 100-105).

Improving the status of women in System organizations: Slow and unsatisfactory progress in this area by the United Nations system is acknowledged by all concerned. However, new human resources management approaches throughout the System and a firmly supportive 1995 policy statement by executive heads in the Administrative Committee on Coordination provide new hope for decisive action. The organizations need to move beyond the limited "numbers game" which focuses only on the percentages of women professional staff. Instead, they should implement coherent action programmes which will finally overcome, in a systematic and steady fashion, the whole mosaic of problems involved in establishing and maintaining equal opportunity and status for women (paragraphs 106-123).

RECOMMENDATION 2. The executive heads of organizations of the United Nations system, individually and collectively, should take the following specific actions to decisively advance the long-stalled efforts at improving the status of women in the System:

(a) formulate, communicate, and implement clear, systematic and coherent action plans to finally establish the equal rights and participation for women called for by the United Nations Charter, including better System-wide human resources statistics (paragraphs 124-142);

(b) given limited management development training and gender awareness courses, at least use the occasion of the 1995 system-wide commitment made by executive heads in the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination to each issue guidance to their staff on the why, what, when and how of their specific programmes to improve the status of women staff (paragraphs 143-145);

(c) give greater attention to the needs and concerns of the long-neglected majority of their women staff - those in the General Service and other categories - rather than just to international professional staff (paragraphs 146-152);

(d) ensure that the policies to combat sexual harassment which they have established (or must establish) will be disseminated and effectively and firmly implemented, to make it clear that sexual harassment will not be tolerated (paragraphs 153-159);

(e) use recent research efforts and inter-agency discussions to formulate all possible policies and procedures to deal with the work/family issues which are of so much concern to staff, particularly as staff mobility becomes more and more a basic requirement of international service (paragraphs 160-166);

(f) as the above issues indicate, recognize a strong need to provide much clearer communication, constructive dialogue, and counselling to staff on women's status, career, family, and other matters as an essential component of proper human resources management (paragraphs 167 -170);

(g) exercise vigilance in any "downsizing" to ensure that women staff's hard-earned status gains are not disproportionately penalized (paragraphs 171-173);

(h) encourage governing bodies' active leadership in improving women's status through regular progress reviews, consistent provision of women candidates for posts, and improvement of their own records of women's participation (paragraphs 174-185).

In addition,

(i) the many concerned interest groups inside and outside the United Nations system should contribute their creativity and dynamism to help overcome the persistent obstacles to improving women's status in the System (paragraphs 186-196).

Critical focal point role of the United Nations: The United Nations has a pivotal and driving role in both substantive and human resources programmes for women, dating back to the signing of the United Nations Charter. The fiftieth anniversary of the Charter and the end of two unsatisfactory decades of women's advancement are a fitting time to reassess the "old habits" of the main United Nations entities for women, and to reorient their work to strong, results-oriented actions that will ensure decisive progress on the many global issues of urgent interest to the world's women (paragraphs 197-201).

RECOMMENDATION 3. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the Secretary-General should consider the following key actions to strengthen United Nations programmes and focal point leadership to the women's programmes of the United Nations system:

(a) the Commission on the Status of Women should take a more active and pragmatic role in assessing implementation problems, progress made, and results and impact of women's and gender programmes, and in seeking the support of the Economic and Social Council in these matters (paragraphs 202-204);

(b) the feeble comparative resources of the Division for the Advancement of Women should be increased or at the very least restored to their 1985 levels, and concentrated much more on information outreach, System-wide programming and follow-up, interaction with non-governmental organizations, United Nations "mainstreaming", and strengthened CEDAW servicing (paragraphs 205-213);

(c) to properly mainstream women's issues, the Division would (at best) be located directly under the Secretary-General, but should (at worst) not be subsumed under any other United Nations subject area (paragraphs 214-217);

(d) whatever the structural decisions made on women's operational, research, and human rights institutions, and regional commission programmes, they should also seek to strengthen the substance of these important functions (paragraphs 218-227);

(e) the actions planned by the Secretariat in response to the 1994 JIU report on deficiencies in improving women's status in the Secretariat are encouraging, but must be followed up on to ensure systematic and concrete actions and decisive results (paragraphs 228-232);

(f) the United Nations needs to move beyond administrative policy-making considerations to establish a system to collaborate and interact effectively with non-governmental organizations in jointly advancing and implementing women's and other important "people's participation" operational programmes around the world (paragraphs 233-240);

(g) the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, by actively supporting the range of actions called for above, can provide a (hopefully final) decisive push to implement the resolutions and policies for women's advancement which they have pursued with such specificity and determination for the past 25 years (paragraphs 241-243).

I. INTRODUCTION

WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED...
to reaffirm faith in...the equal rights of men and women...

"The United Nations shall place no restriction on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal organs."

-- *Preamble excerpt, and Article 8, of the Charter of the United Nations, 1945.*

1. The United Nations Charter marked a crucial starting point for the advancement of women worldwide. Particularly during the past two decades the United Nations system has had a series of action plans and strategies to further this effort.[1] **In 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing provides an important juncture to assess the slow progress of the past decades, and means and actions to hopefully accelerate and strengthen this process in the future.**

2. A great deal of analytical and policy information is being gathered for the Fourth World Conference and its Platform for Action. While the proposals for the Draft (May) Platform contain a section on institutional arrangements, its principles are general ones on the desirability of strengthening. The Inspector, however, believes that the present time is a very important opportunity to seek out new directions and mechanisms to strengthen accountability for, and the results of, United Nations system programmes and human resource efforts for women's advancement. Only through such decisive actions can the System and its individual organizations move beyond the slow progress of the past, and provide maximal support to women's advancement around the world in the future.

3. Three major recent developments provide quite significant new opportunities for women's advancement through and in the programmes of the United Nations system.

(a) Strong new global policy emphases on social development, human resources development, participative programmes, and grassroots operational efforts - all of which very specifically and centrally recognize the role of women - provide powerful new momentum to System programmes for women's advancement.

(b) New emphases on human resources management and holding managers accountable for managing human as well as financial resources should help accelerate the advancement of women in the United Nations system, as discussed in a 1994 JIU report.[2]

(c) There are strong pressures toward greater accountability, management improvement, and oversight throughout the United Nations system, particularly in terms of significant steps to establish strategic planning, performance management, and greater assessment of programme results and performance, as examined in a 1995 JIU report.[3]

4. The basic objective of this report is to examine and help improve the management of women's programmes in the System, both substantive programmes for the advancement of women and those to improve their status in the organizations. The progress made in these areas, while sometimes significant, is still quite disappointing after 50 years of policy pronouncements and 20 years of action programmes. There is a need for new ideas and

actions to ensure that these programmes will have a dynamic character and enhanced impact to accelerate women's advancement through and in the programmes of the United Nations system, rather than settling as a tired or marginal activity in the organizations. This JIU report therefore attempts to identify specific top priority issues and problems, and innovative mechanisms and approaches, that can lead to results-oriented programmes and an accelerated pace of progress after the Beijing conference.

5. The report pays particular attention to the "focal point" mechanisms for women's programmes within the United Nations itself, but otherwise concentrates primarily on system-wide approaches and patterns, with some reference to noteworthy practices and experiences in individual agencies. The Inspector visited and/or sent questionnaires to the women's and gender programmes, personnel offices, and staff and women's groups of more than 30 United Nations departments, programmes, funds, and offices and the specialized agencies. She contacted inter-agency bodies and more than a dozen non-governmental organization networks and groups active in women's programmes, as well as many other people with expertise and experience in this field. She is most grateful to all those who contributed their views and suggestions.

6. The report is organized as follows. After a brief survey of women's programmes, Chapter II notes new opportunities for the System's programmes for women's advancement, briefly summarizes the general status of progress and problems in the System, and then concentrates on major actions needed to strengthen the programmes in the future. Chapter III applies the same framework to the organizations' programmes for improvement of the status of their women staff. Chapter IV concentrates on the "focal point" and related institutions of the United Nations as they relate to both substantive women's programmes and to follow-up action on the 1994 JIU report on the status of women in the Secretariat.

II. SUBSTANTIVE PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN'S ADVANCEMENT

"In the developing world today, many more boys become literate than girls. In some countries, twice as many boys as girls are brought to health centers for treatment. Employment rights, social security rights, legal rights, property rights, and even civil and political liberties are all likely to depend on the one, cruel chromosome distinguishing human male from human female."

-- *James P. Grant, Executive Director, UNICEF, in The State of the World's Children, 1992*

"... there is a [strong] link between International Women's Day 1995 and the United Nations as a whole...because the problems faced by women everywhere lie at the heart of the global agenda. Until the rights and full potential of women are achieved, enduring solutions to the world's most serious social, economic and political problems cannot be achieved. In many cases, efforts to improve the lives of women offer the most immediate means of changing entire societies for the better."

-- *Boutros Boutros-Ghali, United Nations Secretary-General, at the Social Summit, Copenhagen, March 1995*

7. The major components of the United Nations system engaged in gender equality efforts (with their year of establishment in parentheses) are fairly straightforward:[4]

- the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) (1946) is the central intergovernmental body for policy and monitoring of the advancement of women in all Member States of the United Nations: it is a functional commission of, and reports to, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC);
- the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1982) is a treaty body that considers progress made by Member States in eliminating discrimination against women;
- the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) (1946), located in the United Nations Secretariat, is a focal point for matters on women, and serves as the substantive secretariat for the CSW and CEDAW;
- the United Nations Institute for Training and Research for Women (INSTRAW) (1976) is a small autonomous body which conducts research to make women more visible and develop training materials to facilitate women's inclusion in development processes;
- the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (1984) is a small semi-autonomous agency within the United Nations Development Programme which serves as a catalyst to ensure involvement of women in development activities and to support innovative and experimental activities;
- the specialized agencies and United Nations components each have their own focal points and varying programmes for women's advancement, and most of them

participate in an annual Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Women (1976), which is held in conjunction with CSW meetings and is serviced by DAW.

8. The above data indicates that all these groups have been established for quite some time. This Chapter begins with an overview. It then briefly examines several key opportunities for stronger programmes for women's advancement, and summarizes the current status, patterns, and problems of those programmes throughout the United Nations system. Finally, the Inspector identifies actions needed to enhance the effectiveness and impact of these programmes in the future.

A. Nature and evolution of women's programmes in the System

9. An overview must begin by noting three important concepts. The first is gender. Early programmes in the 1940s and 1950s focused on women's rights, which then shifted in the late 1960s to concern with women's roles in development, as reflected in many later Women in Development (WID) programmes. However, a further shift has taken place, to avoid the limitations of looking at women in isolation by looking at gender. This approach examines socially constructed relations between men and women, and the systematic subordination of women by men, in diverse situations.

10. Gender approach advocates do not argue that development and all other issues on the global agenda would proceed better if women were fully incorporated, but that women's status in relation to men is the key issue. Gender analysis views both the practical needs of women and men in terms of the productive and domestic roles they play in society and the strategic gender needs which emerge from the analysis of women's subordination to men. A CSW resolution in 1993 sought to substitute gender analysis for analysis based only on sexual differentiation, and recommended work to establish a common definition of gender-focused planning for the United Nations system.[5] Since this transition is still underway, the "women's" and "gender" terms are both used in this report. (In addition, at the 1995 CSW session a contact group was formed to seek agreement on a common understanding of "gender" in terms of the draft Platform for Action: its report will be considered at consultations in September before the Fourth World Conference on Women).

11. The shift from a "women's" to a "gender" focus in development is a very difficult and complex transition which is critical to future operational success. A new analysis by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) examines the evolution in many development organizations from "Women in Development" to gender programmes. Tensions arise from linking gender justice with economic efficiency, in the degree of analytical priority given to husband and wife "togetherness", and between "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches to "gender-aware" development. The report stresses the importance of both "top-down" action by states to promote gender equity at the macro level and "bottom-up" work by women's NGOs to create opportunities and empowerment for women. It concludes that if planners do not somehow overcome present confusion and operationalize gender concepts, it will not be possible to firmly integrate them into development policies.[6]

12. Second, **"mainstreaming"** is generally considered essential to strong programmes for women's advancement. The first System programme for women's advancement in the 1970s linked the discrimination against women which occurs in practice with the fact that women's interests and programmes were separated from general programmes and activities performed mainly by and for men. Like other parts of the women's movement, the System thus sought, very gradually, to establish integrated programmes in which (a) women become part of major programmes, (b) the programmes take account of women and gender issues, and (c) women become involved in determining priorities for the programmes. This "mainstreaming" approach to equality, development, and, more recently, peace issues has been pursued in subsequent women's programmes in the System ever since.

13. Like gender, mainstreaming has become a central concept of women's and gender programmes, but it still can be very elusive.[7] **Many people now consider that an organization must combine mainstreaming efforts with specific activities for women, also known as "targeting."** Relying on mainstreaming alone creates the risk that women's issues will be submerged and perhaps even lost in many other programmes. Concentrating only on specific activities for women, however, tends to segregate these activities and greatly hamper the inclusion of gender concerns throughout an entire organization.

14. Mainstreaming is not just a vague approach applied to almost every issue. Over the years several issues have emerged as women's core concerns: rights, entitlement, investment, voice, poverty, reproductive labour, security, and empowerment.[8] More recently, the proposals for the Draft (May 1995) Platform for Action for the Beijing conference identify 12 "critical areas of concern", and present strategic objectives and actions to deal with them (those areas on which language was not agreed upon as of May 1995 are informally summarized and identified here in parentheses):

(a) the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women;
(b) unequal access to and inadequate educational opportunities;
(c) inequalities in access to health and related services;
(d) violence against women;
(e) advance peace, promote conflict resolution and reduce the impacts of armed or other conflict on women;
(f) (economic equality and independence for women);
(g) (shared power and women in decision-making);
(h) insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women;
(i) (human rights of women);
(j) (women and the media);
(k) (women and the environment);
(l) (the girl child).[9]

15. Third, **substantive women's programmes and women's status issues are intertwined** in the world and in organizations. Although they are placed in separate chapters in this report, it is clear that substantive gender programmes will be stronger, better applied, and better understood if they are led and implemented by both men and women, especially at top management and programme management levels. Conversely, women's status and career advancement in an organization should be facilitated if that organization is already gender-aware and gender-oriented in its substantive programmes.

16. Finally, there is a need to assess the progress made after two decades of global women's programmes and worldwide effort. The record shows some dramatic gains, but a far larger proportion of problems remain to be overcome in a world that is still very unequal. On the positive side, the Human Development Report 1995 of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) notes that:

- Female life expectancy has increased 20 per cent faster than that of males.
- Females have advanced nearly twice as fast in adult literacy and combined school enrolment in the developing world.
- More than half the women in the developing world now use modern contraceptives, and their fertility rate has fallen from 5.4 in 1970-1975 to 3.6 in 1990-1995.
- The proportion of women administrators and managers in industrial countries has nearly tripled from 15 per cent in 1970 to 40 per cent in 1990.
- In several Nordic nations, women and men have near equality in their access to economic and political opportunities.[10]

17. On the "tasks remaining" side, the list is much longer. For instance, again according to the UNDP report:

- No society treats its women as well as its men; the difference is only in the degree of gender disparity, not in the existence of such disparity.
- Women constitute about two-thirds of the world's illiterates: about 40 per cent of women living in developing countries are illiterate.
- Women still have only 36 per cent of total jobs, one-third of the share of national income, one-tenth of parliamentary seats and 5.5 per cent of total cabinet positions.
- Out of 1.3 billion people living in absolute poverty, over 70 per cent are women.
- Nearly one-third of women report sexual abuse during childhood or adolescence, and nearly one-half of married women experience domestic violence.
- In many countries, existing laws treat women and men unequally.[11]

B. New opportunities

18. In the late 1980s the United Nations system began a major reorientation of its development programmes. The General Assembly called in 1989 for reform of operational activities; urged the strengthening of national capacities, human resources, and self-reliance; and advocated maximal participation in development. In 1990 the UNDP Governing Council called for new strategies to strengthen national capacities in six areas, the first being "poverty eradication and grassroots participation in development." The Fourth International Development Strategy, also adopted in 1990, stated, as a first important social and political objective, the enhanced participation of all men and women in economic and political life. And in new system-wide guidelines for the eradication of poverty in 1992, the President of ECOSOC urged all institutions to help foster popular participation at the national, regional, and local levels.[12]

19. The "participation" concept is particularly important for women. A thorough International Labour Organisation (ILO) study of participation in rural development identified three major principles of a strategy of participation: (1) the primacy of people (they are key actors in, not objects of, development); (2) people's knowledge (local knowledge must be

incorporated in projects); and (3) **people include women**. This last principle does not merely seek to redirect strategies away from the past male domination of development practice. Instead, participatory development recognizes women as partners and equal constituents who must be empowered and made self-reliant participants alongside men in development processes.[13]

20. Recent global conferences and summits have also placed much greater emphasis on women's central roles and importance:

(a) The Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children of 1990 (in support of the Convention on the Rights of the Child which entered into force in 1990) recognizes the critical role that women play in the well-being of children; urges action for the enhancement of women's status and their access to economic and social services, beginning with the girl child; and identifies maternal health, nutrition and education as key determinants of both women's survival and well-being and the well-being of their children;

(b) the Summit on the Economic Advancement of Rural Women in Geneva in 1992 sought to raise decision-makers' consciousness of the condition of rural women, especially the poorest, and establish objectives and strategies to enhance their welfare and that of rural families around the world;

(c) the Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 in Rio de Janiero stated in its Rio Declaration that the full participation of women is essential to achieve sustainable development, and in its "Agenda 21" action plan called for enhancing women's human resource capacities and ensuring their full participation in decision-making and implementation of the Agenda;

(d) In 1993, the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna affirmed that the human rights of women and the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of human rights;

(e) The Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994 contained a Chapter emphasizing the importance of the empowerment and status of women, eliminating all forms of discrimination against the girl child, and the role of men in bringing about gender equality in light of their preponderant power in nearly every sphere of life; and

(f) the Social Summit in Copenhagen in 1995 stated as a main element that nations should promote gender equality by removing restrictions on women's rights and giving men and women equal access to income and education.

21. In addition, there is a recent and much increased emphasis on accountability, improved management, results,and performance in United Nations system programmes. The related 1995 JIU report on these topics found that the traditional negotiating, standard-setting, research, and development cooperation functions of the System have been joined in the last decade by many urgent and complex operational programmes. Funds are tight, and both donors and recipient countries increasingly insist that both the old and new programmes provide maximum effectiveness and minimal waste.

22. In response to these pressures, the organizations must establish new organizational climates and managerial processes, streamline work, and clearly and fairly hold managers and staff accountable for their performance, and for programme results and impacts, on a continuous basis. This "management of change" is enormously difficult, but many organizations are now establishing strategic planning and performance management processes to strengthen accountability and best deploy their scarce resources.[14] The strong pressure for change in old ways of doing things, and heightened attention to

accountability and transparency, should - repeat should - facilitate efforts to fully implement the many United Nations system policy declarations and commitments on behalf of women, and the status of women in the organizations.

23. Finally, the two decades of women's programmes have slowly raised consciousness about women's inequality, issues, and problems, as well as awareness of the vast potential contributions that women can and should make to society and development. Many people worldwide (and in the United Nations system organizations and governing bodies) are still relatively poorly informed about women's issues, but it is probably true that understanding is higher than in the past. In fact, a number of knowledgeable social scientists and historians have observed that the entry of women into the public sphere, from the community on up to the national and international level, is one of the great revolutions of the twentieth century.[15] This trend may finally be reaching a "critical mass" of recognition and support, so that decisive operational actions for women at all levels are needed now more than ever before.

C. Current status, patterns and problems

24. As part of the preparations for the Fourth World Conference, the DAW prepared a review and appraisal of selected activities of various System agencies and intergovernmental bodies: their policies and actions for women's advancement, actions for women staff; their research and policy, development cooperation, financial assistance, and information and advocacy efforts; and System coordination and planning activities.[16] The Inspector found that women's and gender programmes in the organizations of the United Nations system can be divided into four general clusters. Several of the large specialized agencies have active programmes which have continued and upgraded activities for women's advancement that were established years ago. They include the Division on Women and People's Participation in Development of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); the Special Adviser on Women Workers' Questions and the major programme "Equality for women" of ILO; and the Special Advisor on Women, Gender and Development of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

25. United Nations voluntary-funded, operational agencies and programmes have somewhat younger but broad-scale gender programmes. They include the Gender In Development Programme of UNDP; the Gender, Population and Development Branch of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); as well as the Women's Development Programmes in the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), an adviser in the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Senior Coordinator for Refugee Women in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

26. The various regional commissions, departments, offices and other units of the United Nations Secretariat have widely varying scales and intensity of women's advancement activities. Some of their activities are mentioned in the following pages, and the overall topic of mainstreaming gender issues in the Secretariat is raised again in Chapter IV.

27. Finally, the smaller and more technical specialized agencies often have a much more limited set of activities and policies for women's advancement, following the belief that their small Secretariats and the often highly-specialized and technical focus of their

operations makes a meaningful programme for women's advancement and status especially difficult to achieve. An exception that indicates what can still be done in a "man's domain" is provided by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). IMO produced a strategy for the integration of women into the maritime sector in 1988, and it has worked to implement, and has actively discussed with its governing bodies, a medium term plan on this topic. On the human resources side, IMO is one of only three System agencies which has actually met its present target percentage of professional-and-above women staff. Its present proportion of 30.6 per cent places it among the System leaders, well ahead of other small technical specialized agencies (see table in Chapter III). IMO has also established a policy and procedures on sexual harassment, and is considering work/family actions, actions to improve recruitment and retention of more women staff, and special training seminars requested by women staff.

28. These positive IMO results demonstrate that policies and activities for women's advancement, both in substantive programmes and human resources management, are relevant for all System agencies, including those that have not yet made much effort to address the issue. The IMO example also indicates the essential elements for success: firm leadership and support from top management, a dynamic women's adviser, and responsive implementation by programme and personnel managers. IMO officials realize, however, that the task is not finished.

29. System-wide, the Inspector also found some broad patterns in the substantive programmes of the organizations. First, women's or gender programmes in the System have a long and rather impressive history of medium-term planning, programming, and monitoring guidance. The CSW prepared a programme of action following the first World Conference in 1975, and in 1985 it drew up the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000, which have since served as the System's major policy tool.[17] The CSW restructured its work to provide programming and coordination for the United Nations and the System, and monitor implementation of the Strategies. It also adopted a long-term programme of priority themes which it has examined since 1988, followed by policy recommendations to governments and other institutions.

30. In addition, the CSW established six-year, system-wide medium-term plans for women and development as a tool for ensuring system-wide coordination. The first such plan covered 1990-1995, and the second proposed plan, adopted in 1993 by ECOSOC, for 1996-2001,[18] is to be reviewed and revised after the Fourth World Conference. In addition, in 1988 ECOSOC established a system of biennial monitoring of progress made by System organizations in implementing the Strategies for consideration by the CSW, plus a quinquennial review and appraisal of global implementation of the Strategies.

31. This elaborate structure has served as a significant framework for organizing and following programmes for women's advancement over the years, and for reconsidering and adjusting efforts as time passes and circumstances change. At the same time, however, the paperwork burden of all these strategies, medium-term plans, and monitoring reports is rather cumbersome. It is also rather difficult to monitor and evaluate with any precision the many general policy pronouncements that have been made.

32. This difficulty of assessing women's and gender policies and actions throughout the United Nations system is indicated by a very useful analytical framework in a new book. It enumerates the complexities and multiple dimensions that should be considered in

conceptualizing and comparing policy objectives, strategies, and measures of progress of women's programmes:

(a) **objective**:
  (i) substantive (women's advancement, gender equality, women's empowerment;
  (ii) instrumental (integration, mainstreaming);
(b) **approach** (integrationist, agenda-setting);
(c) **strategies**:
  (i) institutional (responsibility, accountability, coordination, monitoring, evaluation, personnel policy);
  (ii) operational (guidelines, training, research, special projects, analytical tools, country programming, macro-policies, policy dialogues);
(d) **measures of progress**:
  (i) mainstreaming (resources, discourse);
  (ii) gender equality (law and norms, human development);
  (iii) empowerment (women's movement, public action, decisionmaking).[19]

33. Unfortunately, the basic financial and staff resources which are being made available within the United Nations to implement these gender and women's programmes are often very small. FAO created its new Division on Women's and People's Participation in Development in 1994 with several professional staff posts for women's integration in development. An Interdepartmental Project on Equality for Women in Employment in the ILO led to more than 20 Working Papers on that subject in 1992-1993. And UNESCO's Draft Programme and Budget for 1996-1997 calls for an increase of some 22 percent in funding of activities for women as one of its four "priority groups". Unfortunately, these commitments are much more the exception than the rule. In other organizations the specific staff and funding resources available are quite modest or almost pitiful, particularly when considered against the heavy workload demands of mainstreaming gender issues throughout an organization. In many and perhaps most organizations the women's programme is highly dependent on the skills and determination of a "one woman operation". Financial resources are usually just as modest. Furthermore, much of the funding that does exist must be gathered in a continual search process from extra-budgetary sources willing to assist one or another ad hoc women's activity or project.

34. Financial and staff resources are only part of the essential requirements for mainstreaming women's and or gender issues throughout an organization. Top level support is absolutely critical. There must be clear policies and strategies, and they must be properly communicated. Gender training is very important for operational programming staff and for general gender awareness. What is involved in overcoming the "old boy culture" and "business as usual" in substantive operations is nothing less than the transformation of the organizational culture and the personal values and gender sensitivity of its staff.

35. Transforming an organizational culture is thus a very daunting task for (typically) a single women's adviser. As if the above operational and resource challenges were not enough, a women's adviser/programme must also struggle against various forms of covert bureaucratic resistance. As included as part of an excellent and very thorough UNICEF gender training document, ten of these institutional barriers may be summarized as (but are not limited to):

1. **denial** - complete denial of the existence of gender gaps or discrimination against women;
2. **inversion** - putting the blame on the victim (it is their own fault that they are not taking advantage of opportunities open to them);
3. **dilution** - admits gender gaps but denies discrimination, thus diluting women's development down to the level of welfare while avoiding questions of empowerment;
4. **selection** - gender issues are excluded during selection of programme priorities and implementation processes (avoiding increased women's participation, control, and/or empowerment);
5. **subversion** - deliberately stalling or complicating action on gender issues (appointing a weak officer, emphasizing procedural matters, referring simple matters to a management committee, losing a file, etc.);
6. **shelving** - a more detectable form of programme delay or destruction, which praises the goals of gender equality but states that "the time is not yet ripe" for significant actions;
7. **lip-service** - a broader version of shelving: officials use the vocabulary of empowerment in programme documents, but actual implementation remains at the welfare level;
8. **compartmentalization** - having a separate Women's Development Officer to sideline women's development and separate it from operating units (an institutionalized version of subversion), which may even be presented as a strong strategy to support women's development (this resistance strategy, of course, strikes closest to home for the United Nations system organizations);
9. **tokenism** - a woman is included in all discussions to address "gender issues" and give the "woman's point of view", so that a committee can give token respect to the token ideas of the token woman for at least five token minutes: frequently encountered at all management levels; and
10. **investigation** - a "last resort" strategy, to show some action when a glaring gender problem exists and policy guidelines require some kind of remedial action, which leads to more sophisticated shelving, i.e. the need to further investigate the problem, causes, and possible actions.[20]

36. The Inspector found from her discussions and analyses that these general barriers do indeed also operate within the United Nations system to make many of the women's "programmes" much less than they appear to be. Some significant things are being achieved and much hard work is being done, but other "accomplishments" are often a facade of rhetoric and intentions. The programmes are also being implemented at a much slower pace and in a much less effective way than what is required to seriously contribute to women's advancement.

37. Although women's substantive programmes have very limited resources and are weakened further by stubborn institutional constraints on effective implementation, they do at least have some important "people power" resources to draw on. There are in fact many groups or institutions which support, facilitate, and supplement the efforts of the basic women's programmes and entities of the System which were identified at the beginning of this Chapter:

(a) **the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Women**, discussed further in section D.4 below, provides a very significant catalytic resource by regularly bringing together those people system-wide who are responsible for implementing women's programmes;

(b) **Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)** active in women's advancement areas, and particularly a dozen major international networks, are among the most dynamic and active of any NGOs groupings, not only in grassroots development activities around the world but in policy formulation, advocacy, consciousness-raising, information sharing, and analysis as well (see section D.8 and Chapter IV.B.6 following);

(c) the **Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP)** of funding agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), has a Women in Development Sub-Group which has pursued a catalytic role in building national capacities, particularly in a multi-year project on gender statistics discussed in section D.6 below;

(d) the **United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS)**, which is funded by 16 United Nations system agencies and programmes, the United Nations regular budget, and extra-budgetary funding from bilateral donors, promotes cooperation between the System and the NGO community worldwide on economic and social development issues, and has an active Women and Development Programme as one of its major activities;

(e) the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has an **OECD/DAC Expert Group on Women in Development** which, for the 1975-1995 period, has conducted a process of strategic planning, policy development, and annual work programmes to work towards ensuring the full promotion of women's potential as contributors to and beneficiaries of the development process;[21]

(f) the **Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA)**, representing some 32,000 international civil servants worldwide, has, among its programmes to improve the terms and conditions of service of staff, one on advocacy and research activities to improve the status of women;[22]

(g) **individual staff groups**, such as the Action Group for Equality of ILO, the United Nations Group on Equal Rights for Women, the Fifty-Fifty group of the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Permanent Working Group on the Situation of Women in UNHCR, are actively involved in pursuing improved status for women in their secretariats;

(h) **independent researchers, research institutes** (inside and outside the United Nations system), **and consultants** assess System performance on women's issues and provide fresh ideas and perspectives for agency programmes (such as a series of papers that UNRISD is presently preparing on integrating gender into development policy,[23] or a one-day conference in March 1995 on Women and the United Nations organized by the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, or new books appearing during 1995[24]);

(i) the **International Civil Service Commission** has done some quite extensive analysis of special measures for women's recruitment, gathering of statistics on women's status in the System, and related work over the years (see Chapter III);

(j) the **Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ)** has reviewed women's status issues on several occasions as part of its responsibilities as a subsidiary body of ACC responsible for coordinating and improving practices in system-wide personnel and general administrative areas (see Chapter III); and

(k) the **JIU** did some very early reports on slow progress in improving the status of women in System secretariats in the late 1970s and early 1980s[25] in addition to its 1994

report and this report (it is a discouraging indicator of the slow pace of women's advancement that groups which participate in the effort only every 15 years or so can still be considered as "actors" in the process).

38. In addition, the women's substantive programmes are attempting to add a much stronger pragmatic and results-oriented emphasis to the System's programmes. The joint statement of the 1994 Inter-Agency Meeting to the CSW strongly and straightforwardly cited **accountability for implementation** as a crucial element for women's advancement. In light of continuing inadequate women's roles in decision-making, insufficient mechanisms, and lack of awareness and commitment to women's rights, the statement urged that:

- -- institutional arrangements under the Platform for Action for the Fourth World Conference need to be clear, with a core implementation and monitoring structure and cross-cutting gender concerns at the international, regional, and national levels;
- -- structures and machinery within larger organizations for women's advancement need to be reexamined, strengthened, and redefined to meet new and emerging realities;
- -- the burden for organizational change must shift from women-in-development units to accountability-driven mechanisms throughout agencies and governments to produce measurable outcomes demonstrating gender balance; and
- -- accountability overall requires realistic, measurable goals, the adoption of enforcement mechanisms, and mobilization and partnership among people, organizations and institutions.[26]

39. In the same vein, the CSW requested a report in 1995 which analyzed existing System programmes in favour of women, in order to offer guidelines for overcoming constraints and increasing cooperation in critical areas. This review, prepared with input from the Secretariat, UNDP, UNFPA, and UNIFEM and under the overall coordination of the World Bank, recommended actions to inter alia:

- -- shift accountability from women's units to other organizational elements, including personnel units, evaluation offices, and managers and country-level staff;
- -- shift institutional accountability from process-oriented input approaches to greater actual use of these inputs and people-oriented and gender-sensitive outcomes;
- -- strengthen evaluation reporting on gender-differentiated outcomes, inter-agency coordination, and provide regular agency reporting to ACC, CSW, and ECOSOC to make results visible;
- -- spread responsibility for action on gender throughout agencies by enhanced recruitment of women, gender training, policies holding managers clearly responsible for good or poor performance on gender matters; and
- -- building alliances between development partners, to encourage co-financing and develop policies and strategies to facilitate cooperative action.[27]

40. This determination to strengthen implementation and follow-up, especially of operational programmes in the field, is essential to the future success of the System's substantive programmes for women. Assessments of mainstreaming and gender approaches to date clearly show the difficulties of firmly establishing and mainstreaming gender approaches.

(a) A very extensive evaluation by two OECD expert groups in 1994 examined its member countries' experience in implementing policies on women in development (WID).

The study found that WID programmes must affect all aspects of development co-operation, and development policy-making, project management, approaches within projects, and the benefits derived by women. However, recognition of WID issues has not yet been translated into operational action. The study concluded that agency managers need to increase WID priority, programme planning, and the commitment of expert personnel and designated funds, in order to close the gap between WID policy and its implementation.[28]

(b) UNRISD has a forthcoming study on the issues and challenges of mainstreaming gender as reflected in the experience of UNDP, ILO and the World Bank in working to institutionalize this process. UNRISD has also issued a new study assessing the factors and constraints involved in integrating gender into state development processes in six different countries.[29]

(c) An evaluation done in UNHCR in late 1993 found that implementation of its policy on refugee women has had positive impacts. In general, however, significant obstacles to effective implementation and institutionalization in UNHCR still remain to be overcome.

41. Much of the performance improvement in women's and gender programmes must come through such reviews and the application of "lessons learned" to sharpen future agency operations and results at the field level. System-wide monitoring and evaluation efforts, still at a preliminary stage, could eventually be significant, but because gender is a cross-cutting variable, evaluation guidelines must integrate it into all types of important development issues.

42. IFAD prepared Draft Brief Core Evaluation Guidelines on Gender Issues for an ACC rural development subgroup in March 1995, based on lessons learned from actual evaluations and the field experience of several agencies, which are now being reviewed and revised. Another important step is for each organization to build accountability mechanisms into its women's/gender strategies. WFP, for instance, is attempting to improve the development and use of gender-specific monitoring indicators to better assess and enhance accountability in implementing its development and emergency operations.

D. Actions needed

43. The Inspector concludes that the substantive programmes of the United Nations system for women's advancement are at a critical point. The existing small women's units and advisers have accomplished a great deal with modest and unstable resources, and they have a network of supportive women's and other organizations to draw on to advance their programmes. However, there are still many gaps, and many areas in which apparent actions are merely cosmetic or "token" activities. The progress made falls far short of the effective mainstreaming needed to ensure strong gender consciousness, revised organizational cultures, and effective women's advancement through the programmes of the United Nations system.

44. The very real danger is one of "battle fatigue" and loss of impetus. After twenty years of women's programmes, the process is still not even halfway completed. There is an unavoidable temptation, particularly from those not really committed to women's programmes, to accept the present arrangements and situations. At the precise time when understanding and support for women's advancement worldwide and in the System is finally reaching a "critical mass", however, it would be an enormous disservice to women

to accept the status quo. Instead, it is essential that the United Nations system move forward much more forcefully and decisively.

45. A good overview of the essential broad actions needed to move from hard-earned past experience to improved future performance was developed at a seminar held by the OECD WID group during the thirty-eighth session of the CSW in 1994. The participants singled out key issues for the coming decade, including

- -- establishing greater clarity of the overall global objectives for women's advancement;
- -- providing mechanisms for women's inclusion in the new challenges and opportunities of the changed international environment;
- -- expanding partnerships between development assistance and women in the South, through government bodies to NGOs for women and to associations and groups;
- -- promoting lessons learned by the WID (and gender) approaches about the interrelations between public demand for change, political will, and institutional capacity to address or achieve change;
- -- increasing the accountability of donors and recipients for the integration of women and gender concerns in development.[30]

46. New thinking and actions are needed to establish more pragmatic, results-oriented programmes along these lines, above all with greatly-increased clarity and accountability. With this in mind, the Inspector offers the following recommendations to help strengthen the management and effectiveness of the System's future programmes for the advancement of women, and to launch them in productive new directions.

1. Sound action programmes in each organization

47. When the United Nations Charter was signed in 1945, or even when the first global women's conference was held in Mexico City in 1975, it might have been important to establish a single United Nations system agency for women's advancement. Now, however, the elaborate restructuring that such a step would require is clearly impractical and unattainable, and probably - in light of mainstreaming concerns - not even the best operational approach. Instead, if the United Nations system is to make major, effective contributions to women's advancement in the future, it is up to each and every organization of the System to establish and implement as sound a programme as possible.

48. Some organizations have given great thought and effort to steadily upgrading and adjusting their gender and women's programmes to make them comprehensive and responsive. Others have adopted a more pro forma approach of appointing women's focal points and coordinators, and carrying out some scattered activities. Still others have felt that they can really do little to address substantive women's issues in their fields of activity.

49. Each organization indeed has different circumstances, activities, and constraints. Yet each organization, as a part of the United Nations system, is also committed to respond to the policies and objectives for women's advancement established by the United Nations Charter, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the many General Assembly and other governing body resolutions, and the guidance given by recent, successive global conferences.

50. In most if not all System organizations, the existing women's focal points and advisors, scattered activities, and general policy intentions still fall well short of the intended "mainstreaming" of gender and women's efforts, both organization-wide and System-wide. Efforts by a number of agencies, however, have shown what kinds of systematic actions are needed to achieve meaningful and coherent action programmes in an organization. For instance, UNDP has just developed an updated gender mainstreaming strategy which focuses on four themes (governance, crisis situations, poverty elimination and environment) in selected priority countries in each region. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has made extensive studies to analyze women's roles and participation in manufacturing and develop more systematic strategies and actions to integrate women in industrial development. And UNICEF has developed a Women's Equality and Empowerment Framework to apply to the design, evaluation, enhancement and monitoring of its programmes and projects, and the ILO has prepared guidelines for integrating gender issues into the design, monitoring and evaluation of its programmes and projects.[31]

51. Every organization involved in operational activities for development can develop a similar, systematic approach to this task. As succinctly outlined by a brochure of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), each organization can, in its fields of activity and expertise:

- -- formulate a comprehensive policy and action plan to incorporate a gender-oriented approach;
- -- work to establish accountability of governments and relevant private sector organizations, NGOs, and community-based organizations in this process; and
- -- help obtain the commitment of governments, NGOs, and other participants to training and organizational development processes to foster gender awareness, gender consultation and gender competence.[32]

52. The action steps needed to achieve these broad elements are to:

- -- train gender catalysts (men and women) to monitor the integration of gender issues and ensure that they become operationally visible;
- -- incorporate a gender dimension in policy research, including criteria and indicators for monitoring and evaluation, and the development of sex-disaggregated data;
- -- support creation of structures that aid governments to support gender-sensitive initiatives;
- -- emphasize practical skills and tools for bringing women and gender issues into the mainstream of policy-making;
- -- help coordinate women's activities between participating groups, and exchange and linking at the national, regional and global levels; and
- -- train women in leadership, managerial, technical, and related skills.[33]

53. Implementing such a programme in each organization has certain operational requirements. First, many women focal points have been assigned to their positions without special training or direct prior experience, and there is a quite considerable turnover in these posts. Organizations need to develop or recruit, and retain, the high degree of specialized professional skills and gender expertise which these positions require. They must also recognize the heavy organizational "change agent" burdens which these people carry by providing them with strong support and appropriate career recognition. In addition,

they must ensure that resources match programme size, rather than merely dumping all responsibilities on the shoulders of one or two people.

54. Second, responsibility and accountability for the programme must be shared organization-wide. Gender and women's programmes must not be the sole concern of the focal point person. They must directly involve top management, programme and project planners, monitoring and evaluation units, human resource or personnel units, and programme managers and field staff as well.

55. Clearly, some organizations' programmes involve gender issues and actions much more than others, and all organizations (and smaller organizations especially) presently have constrained programme and personnel resources. No organization, however,is exempt from gender issues and problems. If the United Nations system is to deliver on its many promises and commitments to women's advancement and maintain its credibility and leadership in this field, each organization must reject "token" women's activities and establish and carry out a serious and sound programme, within the above framework, to deal with gender and women's issues and further women's advancement. Staff training, as discussed in the next section and in Chapter III, is critical to increase staff understanding of the links between women and sectoral or technical issues.

56. The Inspector recommends that each organization of the System identify and address its substantive gender programme issues and needs within the above systematic framework and develop, implement, adjust, and report to its governing bodies on a sound and serious action plan to deal with them. The CSW can play an important advisory and monitoring role in the future to help ensure that all organizations establish and continue such a coherent, organization-by-organization and system-wide effort.

2. Gender training programmes

57. As already noted several times, gender training is a critical element in "mainstreaming" gender programmes and perspectives throughout an organization. Unfortunately, many System organizations still have little or no such training. This means not only that people who should be actively using gender analysis - such as programme and project planners and evaluators - are not doing so, but also that many staff are not even aware that gender issues and perspectives exist. It is very hard to have successful programmes for women's advancement in such an organizational culture.

58. Some organizations, however, have made significant progress.

(a) In 1987 UNDP began to mainstream gender training into all UNDP programmes and projects. Assessments in 1989 and 1992 indicated that this training had raised awareness of gender issues in UNDP and helped shift from a women in development to a gender approach. In mid-1995 UNDP will be preparing new training materials and implementing a revised gender training strategy which places greater emphasis on building national capacity and supporting national groups of gender trainers.[34]

(b) UNHCR established its People Oriented Planning (POP) training programme in 1989 to aid refugee women. Over 1100 people have attended two-day workshops which analyze gender factors in refugee programmes to improve protection and interventions.[35] In 1994 the programme was expanded to train and collaborate with indigenous women's groups and

build their capacities, but it has still not been able to keep up with the rapid expansion of UNHCR humanitarian programmes in recent years.

(c) INSTRAW is the only institute in the United Nations system with a mandate on research and training for the advancement of women. It has trained more than 1,000 people in statistics and indicators on women; women, water supply and sanitation; and women and new and renewable sources of energy in developing countries. The Draft (May) Platform for Action for the Fourth World Conference tentatively calls for strengthening INSTRAW and promoting its role as a focal point for gender training in the System.

(d) At the request of the FAO Council, FAO developed and implemented a two-year training programme in 1992-1993. Focusing on why women's issues are important and how they can be integrated into plans and projects, this programme trained more than 700 people. It has led to a demand for further courses and materials for applying gender analysis to specific areas, expansion into field-level training, and the development of a set of more precise manuals for carrying out gender analysis.[36]

(e) The UNICEF Executive Board, and a 1992 multi-donor evaluation, recognized the need for thorough training of all UNICEF staff and country partners in gender responsive programming. A comprehensive training package was developed as the foundation of the UNICEF strategy to mainstream gender. To date, more than 1,060 UNICEF staff and 7,800 government and NGO counterparts have been trained.[37]

(f) UNFPA has provided extensive gender training to its headquarters and field staff for several years. Workshops being held in-mid 1995 concentrate in particular on the strategic and analytical shift from a narrow women in development concept to a broader gender focus, and on ensuring that gender issues are mainstreamed in all UNFPA programmes and projects at the country level;

(g) The ILO has also developed an extensive briefing kit on gender issues in the world of work which analyses concepts and approaches to gender equity, their promotion in the ILO, and current issues for women workers in the world's regions, and which will be implemented during 1994 and 1995.[38]

59. As with action programmes, gender training in each organization is essential if the United Nations system and each of its agencies are to fulfill their promises and maintain their credibility in worldwide women's advancement. The Inspector believes that the good work done in the above agencies provides excellent information which can be adapted and used in others. She recommends that each organization, whether bilaterally or through the Inter-Agency Meeting, and with the encouragement of the CSW, carefully assess the gender training programmes already established in the system, and then adopt and adapt appropriate elements. These elements should be used in the organization's regular management training programmes, or in special training programmes for - at the very least - those of its staff who are involved in programme and project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation for operational activities.

60. In addition, the great importance of gender training deserves more assessment of results obtained from past efforts within the United Nations system. Several agencies noted a need to consider reviews which various agencies have made of their programmes, meetings of gender trainers, and past inter-agency gender training attempts. It would be quite useful to determine more closely what kind of gender training has been successful, and its actual effects on the understanding and application of gender issues and concepts in organizations. DAW and the Inter-Agency Meeting could make a useful contribution to future action in this area.

3. Sharpening programme analysis

61. System-wide, as noted above, the substantive programmes for women's advancement have a long-established structure of strategies and system-wide plans to guide their work, together with some monitoring and evaluation processes to assess progress made. System-wide programming and co-ordination of the complex joint programmes of the United Nations system has been an elusive goal for many years. The Inspector believes that the programming of women's advancement, though leaving much to be desired, may well have come closer to achieving success than almost any other substantive area, and has contributed significantly to a much stronger system-wide effort for women's advancement.

62. At the same time, however, the planning, programming, assessment, and follow-up work must be kept in proper perspective.

(a) The intergovernmental objectives and goals that have been established, as already discussed, are rather "soft" as to exactly what is to be achieved, how, when, and by whom. Under these constraints, monitoring and evaluative assessments cannot achieve a high degree of specificity, but can only be general approximations;

(b) The programming tasks have become much more complex, as the major global conferences of the 1990s have added important new dimensions, aspects, and goals for women's programmes which must be harmonized and taken into account in future programmes;

(c) The organizations, as noted above, are now shifting more toward a "strategic approach" which emphasizes flexibility and responsiveness to changing circumstances. Thus, future programming work should not become too locked into broad, general targets placed five or ten years in the future, but respond equally to urgent emerging needs such as the problems of refugee women that now require much greater attention than they received in the past;

(d) Perhaps most importantly, the very thin staffing of substantive women's programmes in almost all the organizations of the United Nations system requires that system-wide planning, programming, and assessment work must not be allowed to crowd out direct efforts to establish and carry on substantive research, training, projects and mainstreaming activities. Many women's programme staff expressed concern at time lost in preparing planning and assessment paperwork which proved to be of little ultimate use relative to the time invested. The CSW, for its part, urged in 1993 that future system-wide planning for women be more strategic and concise, and include more substantial information on strategies, time-frames, concrete measures, resources, and allocation of responsibility for implementation.[39]

63. The Inspector thus recommends that the existing value and stimulus of system-wide planning and particularly assessment and follow-up activities be maintained, but with a very pragmatic focus on making it only a part of substantive programmes for women's advancement. She believes (as discussed in subsequent sections of this report) that present paperwork problems can be greatly reduced by establishing a specific, full-time capacity for system-wide programming and follow-up in DAW, strengthening the coordinative work of the Inter-Agency Meeting, and more interaction with the CSW to streamline programming work and ensure that it is a dynamic, rather than distracting, component of substantive programmes for women's advancement in the System.

64. Above all, as already mentioned, accountability and transparency are increasingly recognized as keys to achieving much more effective decision-making, results, and impact of international programmes. This is particularly recognized in women's programmes, not only as shown by the strong 1994 statement of the Inter-Agency Meeting on accountability and responsibility already mentioned above, or in a section in the annual UNICEF Progress of Nations report assessing worldwide statistics and other indicators of progress for women,[40] but also in significant global policy initiatives such as those demanding accountability for women's human rights.[41] Installing and using a streamlined, transparent, and pragmatic system of System-wide monitoring and follow-up of programmes for women's advancement can make a critical contribution to this effort.

4. Regularizing inter-agency meetings

65. Following the first global women's conference in Mexico City in 1975, an Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on women was established. Representatives of the various agencies and programmes meet for two days in conjunction with the annual sessions of the CSW: they held their nineteenth meeting in March 1995. With backstopping from DAW, the meetings discuss programming and coordination matters, operational activities, preparation of reports, and other matters. The meeting presents a joint statement to the CSW each year, and also submits a report to the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC).

66. There has been some discussion of eliminating the inter-agency meetings after the Beijing conference. The rationale is apparently related to the quite legitimate emphasis on streamlining the mechanisms of the ACC and holding inter-agency bodies to an absolute minimum, or of incorporating the Inter-Agency Meeting into some other existing inter-agency body. However, many other people believe that the meetings have a very important and well-established function and should continue, and would lose their essential mainstreaming purpose if made part of some other body. The proposals for the Draft (May) Platform for Action for the Fourth World Conference make many references to the importance of strengthened system-wide planning, followup, and coordination during the 1995-2000 period to ensure implementation of the Platform, but they make no specific mention of the Inter-Agency Meeting.[42]

67. The Inspector believes that elimination of the Inter-Agency Meeting or its combination with another body would be a grave mistake and would cripple system-wide efforts for women's advancement. The annual meetings have proven their worth over nineteen years of existence. Their continuing potential is evidenced by the strong joint statement on strategic planning, accountability and dialogue measures which the Meeting provided to the CSW in 1994. The meetings have great value in permitting women's officials in each organization to interact each year, and for developing joint programming, reporting, and co-operative activities. Some officials noted that the small technical agencies in particular are totally dependent on the Inter-Agency Meeting as the only forum which informs them of overall developments concerning women's advancement in the System. Furthermore, the Inter-Agency Meeting, after nineteen ad hoc years, is in no way a new body, but a well-functioning and fully established one which would be enormously difficult to replace by any other arrangement.

68. Holding the inter-agency meetings at the same time as the CSW sessions also provides an irreplaceable opportunity for agency representatives, DAW, CSW members,

NGOs and others to have substantive discussions with agency representatives from throughout the System and to develop new initiatives and activities. Having attended many CSW sessions, the Inspector believes that there is perhaps no "focal point" event anywhere in the United Nations system where all the various substantive participants in a major System programme area can interact as intensively and productively as occurs during the CSW sessions.

69. The Inspector therefore recommends that the nineteen-year-old Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Women be "regularized" as a continuing body of ACC, and recognized as a critically important mechanism for system-wide development and implementation of substantive programmes for women's advancement. The shedding of its "ad hoc" status should also be accompanied by actions to clarify the Meeting's objectives, functions and activities in a way that makes its agenda much more substantive and allows it to facilitate women's programmes and its relationships with the CSW through a carefully-considered set of pragmatic, action-oriented, collaborative activities and processes. The linkages that this meeting of "women's officials" has with the executive management in each of the organizations and with policy and decision-making machinery in the United Nations should also be carefully considered, so that the Inter-Agency Meeting can operate with maximum System-wide effectiveness.

5. Assessing and enhancing resources

70. The Inspector regrets that she was unable to include an inventory of system-wide resources for women's advancement programmes in this study, (although she has made some resource comparisons of the position of DAW within the United Nations Secretariat in Chapter IV). In large part this shortcoming occurred because she had not fully realized the extent of the poverty of resources for women's programmes, but she did discover it during the course of her review.

71. The proposals for the Draft (May) Platform for Action for the Fourth World Conference call for more effective use of existing resources, and the mobilization of adequate resources from many sources worldwide to achieve its objectives. They also urge the development funds and programmes of the United Nations system to ["at least double" or to "consider the adequacy of"] the resources targeted towards eliminating disparities between males and females in their technical assistance and funding activities, but provide no specific current data.[43] Informal analyses by ACC and others have suggested that total resources explicitly allocated to advancement of women by biennium were about $24 million in 1988-1989, $62 million in 1990-1991 (but with emphasis that this figure was neither accurate nor comparable), and $20 million in 1992-1993. However, it is recognized that there are presently no clear means of determining the amount of these resources.[44]

72. Therefore, no one really knows what and how many resources are presently made available for substantive women's programmes within the United Nations system, and how they are deployed. The answer appears to be "very few" relative to the half of the world's population directly concerned with the effectiveness of these programmes. It is very important for future system-wide planning, programming, accountability, and performance expectations to determine as clearly as possible what the existing resource levels are, in order to fairly assess what the programmes can accomplish.

73. The Inspector recommends that a first task of the CSW, DAW, and the Inter-Agency Meeting after the Beijing conference should be to make a system-wide inventory of current biennial staffing and funding for substantive programmes for women's advancement in each and every organization, following a common methodology to allow "best-possible" consolidation and comparison of data, but keeping the process as simple as possible to minimize paperwork burdens. The analysis (and future system-wide programming for women in general) should delineate clearly those activities which will be funded by regular budgets, and those for which extrabudgetary, voluntary funding will be sought. Such an analysis should be published and submitted to the CSW, as a "baseline" analysis to establish the resources of the System currently available for substantive programmes for women's advancement. This amount could then be compared to that which organizations make available in the near future, to see to what extent increased resources will be realized.

74. The transparency provided by this analysis could serve other important purposes. Agencies might be asked to supply the comparable data for 1984-1985, to see to what extent support for women's programmes changed during the past decade. This analysis would also be very revealing in comparing the actual System resources presently available to the sweeping challenges and tasks of mainstreaming women's programmes throughout the United Nations system. In addition, the information might be very informative to compare resources for women's programmes with the total annual expenditures of the United Nations system. For instance, the estimated $10 million (half of the 1992-1993 figure mentioned above) of total System resources directly allocated to women's advancement for 1993 amounts to only .00156 of the $12.8 billion of total System expenditures for 1993 as identified in the 1995 JIU accountability report.[45] This is one-sixth of one percent, a very tiny sum relative to the approximately 50 percent of women in the global population. Similar comparisons of relative to total resources might be made organization by organization.

6. New initiatives: the example of gender statistics

75. Words which advocate the interests of women, however persuasive they may be, must be accompanied by numbers if they are to really influence policy, and to help women understand how their lives are changing. In the 1970s there were very few statistical indicators to answer even the most basic questions.

76. By the 1980s, however, the situation had improved, and the United Nations Statistical Office, together with other United Nations units and programmes, and with input from other System agencies and consultants, undertook detailed consultations. The aim, from the beginning, was to design a statistical sourcebook which would provide attractive design, good analysis, and a non-technical text. The participants also sought to provide numbers and analysis that would reach women, the media, and women's advocates everywhere; inform them about how much women contribute to economic, political and family life; and support appeals to persuade public and private decision-makers to change policies that are unfair to women.

77. The result, The World's Women 1970-1990,[46] succeeded resoundingly. It sold out in four months, and has since become the best-selling United Nations research publication ever. It received extensive media coverage worldwide, and the New York Times cited it as "the first attempt to measure the place of women in society statistically." The key factors which produced this response were sufficient funds for publicity, production of

a first-rate product, and inter-agency collaboration not merely to avoid duplication but to pool existing resources and expertise. The United Nations Statistical Commission has subsequently welcomed the work on gender statistics and encouraged its analytical, user-oriented approach in other social fields.

78. Recently, there has been increased interest in the use of gender statistics as a tool to influence policy and planning for the advancement of women. Past problems, such as measuring the economic activity of women and accurately analyzing household data, and gaps in subject coverage, such as access to credit or participation in decision-making processes, are being increasingly addressed. National and international agencies are undertaking many efforts to improve concepts and methods of gender data collection, compilation, and dissemination. The long-range objective is to integrate gender statistics into ongoing statistical programmes in order to obtain a more complete and objective picture of the situation of women and of equality between the sexes.

79. Within the United Nations system the United Nations Statistics Division has joined with the JCGP/WID Sub-Group in a three-year project (1992-1995) to build national capacity to develop gender statistics publications, in order to facilitate gender-responsive programming. This project has led to preparation of a manual for compiling and organizing statistics at national levels, and regional and sub-regional workshops to introduce the manual and train users and producers, which is being completed during 1995. In addition, during 1995 the United Nations will publish a second issue of The World's Women encompassing the full 1970-1995 period: it will also include information on such new topics as women refugees and the impacts of crime on women.

80. The Inspector finds the work on gender statistics to be quite significant for several reasons. First, as the first two paragraphs of this sub-section note, it is extremely important to inform people worldwide of the situation and progress of women in many areas as a basis for informed action. Much remains to be done to expand this work, and the Inspector hopes that it will receive the strong support it deserves.

81. Second, the gender statistics efforts are a clear example of successful and close inter-agency co-operation. The World's Women 1995 is co-sponsored by 11 partners: DESIPA/Statistical Division of the United Nations, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UNIFEM, DAW/the Secretariat of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Department of Public Information of the United Nations, and INSTRAW, WFP, UNESCO, and WHO. The JCGP/WID Sub-Group project for the preparation of national gender statistics publications involves UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, UNIFEM, WFP and IFAD. Other organizations have also made inter-agency co-operative efforts, such as UNIDO's project on gender-based statistical data on women's role and status in manufacturing, developed in cooperation with other statistical offices in the System. It appears that such efforts will continue in the area of gender statistics after the Beijing conference, but the Inspector believes that this type of close collaboration should also be sought out in other important areas of System programmes for women's advancement.

82. Third, the Inspector finds the first report on The World's Women to be particularly noteworthy as a breakthrough activity: it provided the kinds of fresh thinking and determined action needed to venture into unexplored and never-attempted territory, with much subsequent success. The System's programmes for women's advancement need this kind of spark, foresight, innovation, and support if they are to reinvigorate their work and ensure its dynamic character. Particularly given the modest resources of gender

programmes, staff creativity will be a critical factor to further women's advancement. It is important to maintain the momentum by identifying the next key issues. Perhaps the United Nations system can help play a critical catalytic role in worldwide efforts to provide micro-enterprise financing for low-income women's groups or women's business startups as part of a wider strategy for poverty alleviation and change in gender inequality.[47] Or perhaps the System can provide a critical catalytic push in combating the many forms of abuse of and violence against women.[48]

83. Fourth and finally, the Inspector believes that the decision to make The World's Women attractive, high-quality, and non-technical was a crucial element. This success highlights very directly the need to move beyond turgid and tedious "UN-speak", and to reach out to a worldwide audience with appealing and persuasive information, as discussed further in the following section.

7. Information outreach and quality

84. The ACC observed in 1992 that the United Nations system is "in the information business" and that "information gathering, analysis and dissemination is the stock-in-trade of the organizations." In a world where the "information revolution" continues its explosive growth, even the most developed countries cannot keep up with everything without international co-operative programmes.

85. The small programmes for women's advancement in the organizations, however, have not yet been able to really fulfill this important responsibility. Their limited resources, combined with their heavy mainstreaming and catalytic responsibilities, have limited their ability to become knowledge centers for women's matters, or to extensively process, analyze, and develop information in their various specialized areas. Some data base activities exist, but this type of activity seems still to be very much a part-time and limited activity (and may continue in this fashion if proper resources are not allocated to this important "outreach" activity in the organizations).

86. The organizations have produced some quite significant and useful publications over the years: a representative selection showing their variety and scope is included as Annex II of this report. However, the Inspector made some search attempts with the help of the ILO and United Nations libraries in Geneva which showed that this selection is limited. A detailed data base search can dig out citations of hundreds of System publications concerning women, but many of these may go back a decade or two and are technical documents or project reports. While these documents are of considerable use to specialized researchers, they have limited general interest. Further, little has so far been done to make it as easy as possible for a potential worldwide audience interested in women's advancement to find out what the United Nations system has to offer.

87. A similar problem exists with computerized data bases. The Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination of Information Systems produced its fifth and last directory of United Nations system information sources in 1994. Its subject index identified almost 50 such data bases with women's materials around the world, but almost all of them were small in size, and they often only had only a small proportion of women's materials. Further, almost none provided "on-line" access. Additional Internet exploration disclosed that the United Nations in New York provides some on-line data on its current global conferences, including

about 30 documents on the Fourth World Conference on Women. A further search suggested, however, that among System agencies only the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) presently have specific information online about their activities for the advancement of women.

88. This limited engagement of System agencies in providing information services for women is understandable in view of the ever-present resource limitations, but it is important to redress this situation in the future. Despite two decades of concerted activity to deal with discriminatory treatment of women in the media and greater employment of women, mass media policy and content are still male-dominated and often present cynical and exploitative images of women. In addition, huge numbers of women in developing regions are still untouched by, and have no access to, modern mass media.[49] The proposals for the Draft (May) Platform for Action for Beijing include strategic objectives on increasing women's access to expression and decision-making in and through the mass media, and promoting a better portrayal of women in the mass media.[50]

89. At the same time (and as a way to bypass the slow changes in and controls of the mass media) there has been an enormous expansion of women's communication activities worldwide. Women's NGOs have formed networks, linkages, and coalitions, organized conferences and meetings, and established newsletters and extensive documentation flows. In particular, they have seized the opportunities produced by personal computers and new telecommunications developments to establish significant computerized networks linked by the Internet, telephone, and satellite connections around the world. Many of the most active of these networks are based in the developing countries of the "South."

90. The slow progress in establishing equal treatment in the mass media, the lack of access of many women to the mass media, and the dynamic spread of alternative and computerized media linkages among women's groups worldwide all - in different ways - underscore the need for more active and effective information roles for the organizations of the United Nations system.

91. The Inspector recommends that the organizations, individually and collectively, increase their efforts to gather, analyze, package, and disseminate high-quality, non-technical information on women's programmes to increase their outreach. She believes that the organizations must also find ways to strengthen their programmes through greater information interchange with the many women's (and other) NGOs and women's (and men's) audiences worldwide, enhance their handling of information in their subject fields, and make their available documentation more attractive and easily available to their clients. Progress might be made by joint activities among agencies; through the use of consultants on women's media outreach, techniques, and production quality; and by a conscious effort to identify and employ new communications channels, such as the Internet, which will become more and more important - especially for women - in the future.

92. In particular, as shown by the gender statistics example, these efforts will be much more successful if they are both collaborative and attractive. The agencies need to identify areas in which they can pool their resources, worldwide networks, and expertise with other agencies and other interested parties outside the System to come up with innovative and appealing information products. They then need to present and promote these products in as effective a way as possible. This would include:

(a) moving beyond the often paralyzing jargon required (or accepted) for reports to intergovernmental bodies to produce concise, non-technical, and attractive information;

(b) modest but carefully-targeted media strategies, which reach out to the global clientele and let them know what is available and how to get it; and

(c) new products, such as wall charts, brochures, packets, and information kits, but also interactive disks, CD-ROMs, and Internet bulletin boards, "home pages", or "sites" which make it as easy as possible for potential readers or viewers to obtain the information which the System's women's programmes have to offer.

93. In an era of instantaneous communication worldwide and of desktop publishing, the possibilities for the emerging "information age" are sweeping and scarcely explored as yet. The women's units of the System should expand the creativity they have already shown in some of their work, by taking the lead in development information activities that reach out to the people of the world whom the United Nations system ultimately serves.

8. Interaction with NGOs

94. In 1993 the JIU issued a report on ways in which the United Nations system could work more actively with local and international NGOs and governments at the grassroots level in operational activities for development. The report explored the important role of NGOs in successfully implementing new participative approaches, their dynamic expansion as development partners, their increasing influence in global policymaking, and ways in which System agencies could interact with NGOs through networking, information exchange, capacity-building and training programmes, and joint operations in the field.[51]

95. The UNDP Human Development Report for 1993 also explored the increasing numbers, influence, advocacy roles, and acceptance of NGOs, and the way in which they reflect the demands of people all over the world for greater participation in civil society and governmental institutions.[52] More recently, thoughtful observers have been exploring the very important trends and implications of changing interaction between governments, NGOs, and international organizations in the operational, humanitarian, and advocacy realms. The old "arms-length" relationships are gone, and much thought must be given to new modes of cooperation to advance the interests of international society (see also the discussion in Chapter IV.B.6 on specific interaction policies and problems with NGOs in the United Nations proper).

96. NGOs are particularly important in women's programmes. Many of the largest NGOs, which already receive billions of dollars of development funding annually, have specific programmes or priorities for encouraging cooperation, empowerment, and economic freedom for women and families. NGOs are also influential not only in development operations, but in other areas important to women, such as human rights and humanitarian relief. In addition, NGOs could play a quite significant role in collaboration with United Nations system agencies in implementing the objectives of the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference around the world. This topic has been raised, but perhaps not been given the priority attention it deserves.

97. The dynamism and advocacy activism of NGOs are reflected in their greatly expanded participation in global conferences. The following table, although incomplete and sometimes approximate, shows the strong growth and large current scale of NGO participation in such conferences (particularly for the four conferences on women), in terms of NGOs formally accredited to the conferences and of participants in the related NGO Forums.

Conference	NGOs accredited	NGO Forum Participants
Women (Mexico City, 1975)	300	2,000
Women (Copenhagen, 1980)	--	4,000
Women (Nairobi, 1990)	--	8,000
Environment (Rio, 1992)	1,400	--
Human rights (Vienna, 1993)	800	5,000 (est.)
Population (Cairo, 1994)	1,000	4,000
"Social summit" (Copenhagen, 1995)	2,400	4,500
Women (Beijing, 1995)	5,000-7,000 (est.)	36,000 (est.)

98. There are complications and confusions in work between United Nations system organizations and NGOs, as very formal organizations meet very informal ones in what might well be described as two different cultures. The intensity and nature of System-NGO cooperation has in fact changed dramatically in the past few years, as discussed at an informal Inter-Agency Meeting hosted by the NGLS in Geneva in late 1994. Increased operational collaboration can be highly stimulating and beneficial to both groups in achieving their common objectives and facilitating development. The potentials for further work are particularly evident in the dialogue at the annual CSW meetings, and the important role of NGOs is noted in the proposals for the Draft Platform for Action for the Fourth World Conference. In the women's programmes, as elsewhere, however, new arrangements need to be developed and established to organize this cooperative work in a maximally effective way.

99. The dynamism of women's NGOs worldwide is proven by their vigorous and ever-expanding record of information, monitoring, policy advocacy, and development activities. The Inspector recommends that the organizations, individually and collectively, explore practical ways to expand the creativity and impact of their substantive programmes for women's advancement through greater interaction and partnership with women's and other development NGOs globally, regionally, nationally, and in communities around the world.

9. Governing body support

100. While the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the CSW have been very steady in their actions and support for women's advancement over the two decades since the original Nairobi conference, the record of the rest of the System is not nearly as good. The Inspector has the distinct impression that in too many of the organizations specific assessment of, and support for, programmes for women's advancement "just kind of disappears" as the issue moves upward through the levels of top management and on into governing bodies. This involves not merely cursory consideration of periodic reports on substantive programmes for women's advancement, but in some cases infrequent or scarcely any submission of progress reports at all.

101. The Inspector understands that the governing bodies have short sessions with many important issues to consider. However, the principle of the equal rights of men and women is enshrined in the United Nations Charter and in countless other documents, conventions, and agreed principles and commitments to action. Even in the most technical agencies, there is a need to periodically determine the progress being made to ensure equality and the absence of discrimination in substantive programmes, and to establish and

apply gender awareness. Active and regular review by governing bodies is essential to support women's and gender programmes, and to provide leadership to fulfill the policy commitments that the United Nations system has made to women.

102. The 1995 JIU report on accountability in the United Nations system observed that executive heads and secretariats are accountable to governing bodies for the wise use of resources provided and for effective performance. In addition, however, governing bodies themselves are accountable to Member States and the peoples of the world for the quality of the programmes that the governing bodies oversee.[53] The programmes of the System cover all aspects of global economic, social and political life, and none of them can avoid involving the half of the world's population that is female. The Inspector would urge the governing bodies to give regular and serious attention, however brief, to their responsibilities for furthering the advancement of women through the organization's programmes, and serving as a steady driving force to examine progress made and ensure maximum possible programme results.

103. Promising initiatives to overcome limited governing body interest have recently been made in UNESCO and WHO. In 1994 UNESCO established a Consultative Committee on Women, reporting to the Director-General and comprised of governing body, National Commission, staff, NGO, and external expert representatives. The Committee is intended to bring a fresh approach to UNESCO's work for women, help prepare for the Fourth World Conference, and advise on UNESCO policy plans and strategies on gender-related issues.[54]

104. A World Health Assembly resolution established a Global Commission on Women's Health in 1993 as a high-level body for advocacy and advice to WHO, to accelerate global action to improve women's health, and to redress inequities in health status. WHO has also established an Interdivisional Steering Committee on Women, Health and Development to promote the integration of women's needs, viewpoints and involvement in all WHO programmes and activities, and encourage increased women's participation in decision- and policy-making at all levels.[55] (Another significant steering committee deals with women's employment and participation in WHO, as noted further in Chapter III.C.8.) These UNESCO and WHO initiatives are clearly an important attempt to involve governing bodies and the entire organization and its clients in women's advancement: the Inspector urges other organizations to consider establishing similar arrangements.

105. In addition, while recognizing all the other competing demands and constraints on governing body time, the Inspector believes that much greater transparency is needed in monitoring the frequency and specificity with which executive heads report, and governing bodies consider and act upon, assessments of progress and problems in substantive programmes for women's advancement. The CSW has already been encouraged to monitor this area. The Inspector believes that increased CSW review attention to governing body deliberations on women's programmes could be a significant factor in at least taking a few steps toward improved top-level support for women's programmes in that elusive "decision-making" realm from which women have for so long been excluded.

III. IMPROVING THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE ORGANIZATIONS

1. "The members of ACC reaffirm their strong commitment to ensuring that the advancement of women is a policy priority within the organizations of the common system and to taking necessary measures to improve the status of women in their respective secretariats. Key to the achievement of gender equality goals is management commitment at the highest levels.

2. ACC is conscious that progress to date has, with some exceptions, been limited. While the overall proportion of women has increased in most organizations, the number of women in senior and policy-making positions remains low. A concerted effort needs to be made to implement existing policies fully, as well as to develop new initiatives to increase the participation of women at senior levels."

-- *excerpt from an ACC Statement on the Status of Women in the Secretariats of the United Nations system, February 1995*[56]

106. Programmes to improve the status of women in the secretariats of the United Nations system are not only integral components of substantive programmes for women's advancement. They are very important in themselves and have received great attention from the General Assembly for 25 years. System-wide, the improvement of the status of women staff has been slow and disappointing. The ACC has repeatedly emphasized the importance it attaches to the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system. In 1985, 1989, and 1990 it issued strong policy statements in this regard. In early 1995, as noted by the quotation above, it issued yet another strong statement. In this 1995 statement, the executive heads of the organizations in the common system committed themselves to consider specific measures at the organizational and inter-agency levels which seek to change this situation.

107. This Chapter surveys the new human resources context in the United Nations system and the current unsatisfactory situation of women's status. It then presents actions which can help the ACC to actually and effectively implement its most recent system-wide policy commitments to improve women's status.

A. New opportunities

108. The 1995 JIU report on accountability cited the "human resources" approach, along with information technology, as perhaps the most significant new developments which are transforming contemporary management and organizations.

109. In contrast to older ideas of "personnel administration" or "personnel services", human resources management views staff not just as production inputs to be administered, but as essential human assets to be carefully selected, encouraged, managed, and developed in a continuous process of organizational strengthening. The human resources approach therefore involves basic changes in management and staff attitudes and in organizational culture and procedures. It encourages innovation, creativity, risk-taking and team effort, as opposed to the rigid procedural rules and narrow individual performance goals of earlier bureaucratic personnel systems.

110. A modern organization needs to plan how best to deploy its human resources, to organize its work flexibly to meet changing requirements, and to establish effective performance rewards or sanctions. These tasks require a human resources department, and programme managers throughout the organization, who can plan and manage the entire human resources cycle: work requirements and availabilities, recruitment and placement, performance appraisal, rewards and sanctions, and training and development.[57]

111. The ICSC has developed a series of policy products over the years to assist organizations in building comprehensive human resource systems.[58] These include guidelines in the areas of career development, training, recruitment and general human resource planning. Unfortunately, status reviews indicated a continuing general lack of coherently-developed human resource systems. For several years ICSC and CCAQ have been conducting extensive inter-agency discussion of performance management and management development issues as an integral part of human resources management.[59] The 1995 JIU accountability report also indicates that more rapid progress is now being made toward these concepts.[60]

112. Some organizations have already made quite significant progress. The Inspector wishes to cite in particular an excellent UNDP brochure, which provides a very succinct and informative overview of a dynamic human resources system. It outlines UNDP efforts to improve human resources management by building capacity, upgrading skills, and introducing or reforming human resources management. It also identifies the major changes made over the last five years in ten different areas, and outlines a human resources strategy for the future, as UNDP's next round of "managing personnel for change."[61]

113. This human resources management trend is a quite positive one for all staff, but particularly for women. The 1994 JIU report on advancing women's status in the United Nations Secretariat highlighted human resources management and accountability mechanisms as key new opportunities for much stronger women's programmes and advancement in the future. In particular, these approaches should provide four elements which make it easier for women, their situations, and their performance to be more accurately and fairly recognized: dynamism, transparency, dialogue, and results.[62] These elements are expanded on in the sections that follow.

B. Current status, patterns and problems

114. Programmes to improve the status of women in the secretariats of the System must be comprehensive and multi-faceted. But, unavoidably, one must begin with the only recognized benchmark in the System: the "numbers game", which measures the proportion of professional-and-above women staff against targets set by the General Assembly and other governing bodies.

115. The CCAQ maintains an inter-organizational data base: because it does not contain certain staff data, the ICSC and CCAQ supplement it through ad hoc requests to the organizations. The table on the next page presents the most recent system-wide statistics, compiled by the CCAQ for the ACC in February 1995. It shows the following target percentages for professional-and-above women staff, target date, and actual per cent achieved (and "as of" date) in the organizations, ranked in descending actual percentage order.

PERCENTAGE BY ORGANIZATION, IN DECENDING ORDER, OF PROFESSIONAL-AND-ABOVE WOMEN

Organization	Target Per cent	Target Date	Actual Per cent	(As of)
UNFPA [63]	50	2000	44	(31.12.94)
UNICEF	50	2000	39	(12.94)
UNHCR	50	long-term	34	(1.95)
UNESCO	30	1995	33.2	(31.12.94)
United Nations	35	1995	33	(31.12.94)
UNDP	50	2000	31.2	(31.12.93)
IMO	30	1995	30.6	(31.12.94)
ILO	30	1995	28.2	(31.12.94)
WHO	30	1995	26.5	(31.12.94)
WFP	35	1997	25.8	(not JPOs, 31.12.94)
IFAD	25	1992	25.6	(31.12.94)
UNIDO	30	1995	24.7	(30.4.95)
WIPO	none	--	24.1	(31.12.93)
ITC	35	1995	23	(1.1.95)
ICAO	30	2003	20.4	(14.6.95)
FAO	35	1995	20	(HQ, 31.12.94)
WMO	none	--	18.5	(31.12.93)
UPU	none	--	16.1	(14.6.95)
UNRWA	30	1994	16	(1.1.95)
IAEA	none	--	14.7	(31.12.93)
ITU	none	--	13.9	(31.12.93)

116. These simple data must be interpreted with many caveats, as discussed in the following paragraphs: total percentages are only one portion of a very complex and still not well understood or described picture. In addition, many organizations now clearly need to update their target percentages for the future, or to specifically establish them. However, it is clear that UNFPA and UNICEF have set the standard, although they too have yet to reach the gender balance target of around 50 per cent. Several other agencies, primarily larger ones, are at or near the level of one third-women at about 30 or 35 per cent. The smaller specialized agencies have greater problems in finding women in their highly technical fields, although IMO, as already mentioned, has done quite well in the traditionally male-dominated global maritime industry. Special mention should also be made of WFP, which has made the most rapid recent progress. Since early 1992, nearly 50 per cent of appointments in the WFP professional career staff have been women, the number of female directors has risen from 0 to 27 per cent, and special efforts are being made at

headquarters and in country offices to recruit more qualified women in the project staff category.

117. Many important patterns and problems lie underneath these basic numbers. A 1993 survey made by ICSC, based on December 1991 data, found that:

(a) women were concentrated by and large at the P-3 and P-4 levels, while the largest concentration of men was at the P-5 and D-1 levels;

(b) most women were recruited at the P-2 level, while men were recruited in the greatest numbers at the P-4 level;

(c) in 1985 ICSC had found that 22 per cent of recruitments for geographic posts were at P-5 and above, yet from 1987-1991 only 2.6 per cent of the total number of women recruited were recruited at these higher levels;

(d) for those organizations which have information on professional staff by occupation (only about half, covering some 7,500 staff), the largest group of women (37 per cent) were employed in administrative fields, and the second-largest (18 per cent) in language-related fields, with 5 per cent in library-related jobs: thus, 60 per cent of women worked in such fields, which are called "non-substantive" areas;

(e) women who received promotions were promoted about as rapidly as men, and faster at higher levels, but this data does not cover staff not promoted, and other data showed that as women aged their number decreased, while as men aged their numbers increased - an interrelationship between age, promotion and time which needs to be further explored; and

(f) in conclusion, women had still not broken the P-4 barrier in significant numbers, were recruited at lower levels and in far fewer numbers than men, and were still concentrated in "non-substantive" occupations.[64]

118. The 1994 JIU report, for its part, found a series of significant patterns in the United Nations secretariat data which underscore and supplement the above data. They appear to generally apply, in varying degrees, to other system organizations as well:

(a) women are still heavily clustered in subordinate positions at the bottom of the hierarchical pyramid, and they almost disappear as grade levels rise;

(b) achievement of existing (United Nations) participation targets was doubtful;

(c) the annual rate of increase in promotions of women is still relatively slow at almost all grade levels;

(d) the "pool" of women candidates available for promotion at each higher grade level gets smaller and smaller;

(e) a very serious problem at the higher levels is that new staff moving into the Secretariat are still overwhelmingly men;

(f) financial crises and other factors have severely hampered overall recruitment, and thus women's recruitment, during the past decade;

(g) at the present paltry pace of increase, it might well take another half century to achieve the overall "equitable balance" of men and women that the General Assembly originally sought for 1980;

(h) it is not surprising that the entire Secretariat programme for women is bogged down when so very few women are at the top levels;

(i) not only are there few women, but they are distributed very unevenly in departments and offices throughout the Secretariat;

(j) the current statistical focus on professional women ignores

-- project personnel, a category in which women have had very low representation for years;
-- women on mission assignments, an important area deserving close attention in the future;
-- the vast majority of women in the Secretariat, women in the General Service category, who are almost totally missing from the action programme, which is a major defect which must be remedied;

(k) identifying the proportions of women in individual departments and offices, and holding senior managers accountable, is not being systematically and transparently done;

(l) the representation of women from different regions is quite variable around the 35 per cent (United Nations) target;

(m) Member States' performance in governing bodies and Permanent Missions has not been better than that of the Secretariat; and

(n) in summary, all these statistics are discouraging and provide a picture of an apathetic and indecisive programme.[65]

119. The five graphs on the next three pages indicate in various ways the slow progress that has been made by women staff in the System (JIU took the chart data from the inter-agency data base and statistics compiled by the CCAQ).

(a) Although gender balance now exists at the P-1/2 level, the percentage of professional-and-above women at each subsequent grade level still drops rather rapidly toward zero, thereby severely reducing the pool of women available to move to upper management levels (Chart I).

(b) More than half of the women professionals are still at the P-1 through P-3 levels, while two-thirds of the men are at the P-4 through D-I levels. In addition, only 6 per cent of the women but 17 per cent of the men are at Director-and-above levels (Chart II).

(c) The United Nations Secretariat led in proportion of women staff in several professional-and-above categories in 1987, but the United Nations voluntary funds have taken the lead since, with the specialized agencies now catching up rapidly at the lower levels. Percentages of women staff at the management levels, however, are still only in the 5 to 20 percent range (Chart III).

(d) In other staff categories - such as project staff - women fare even more poorly, especially in appointments of people in their 40s and above (Chart IV);

(e) Although most attention focuses on professional-and-above women at headquarters locations, it must not be forgotten that the vast majority of headquarters women staff are General Service, while women are a distinct minority in other established offices and especially in projects (as well as in total United Nations system staff) (Chart V).

120. To improve not only women's recruitment, but their subsequent development, promotion, rotation and retention in the organizations, action programmes are needed. The 1994 JIU report analyzed in some detail the Secretary-General's report which established the initial action programme for the United Nations Secretariat in 1985.[66] Although this programme subsequently lost its momentum and failed to achieve its objectives, it still provides a very sound basis for a programme for women's advancement. The 1985 report began by posing the question of why the United Nations had not achieved the goals set by the General Assembly despite 15 years of "extensive and detailed legislation" covering "virtually every aspect of personnel policy." It cited a lack of accountability among participants, and the need for attitudinal changes and firm management commitment and concerted action throughout the organization.

Chart I. Percentages of United Nations system men and women staff at each professional-and-above grade level, as of 31 December 1993

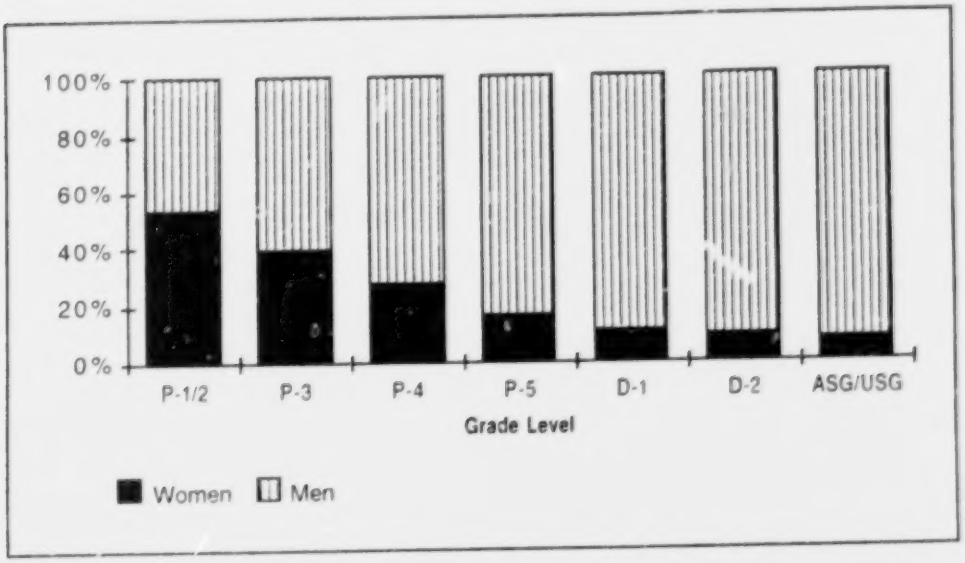

Chart II. Percentages of United Nations system men and women staff at each grade level as a percentage of total men and total women professional staff, as of 31 December 1993

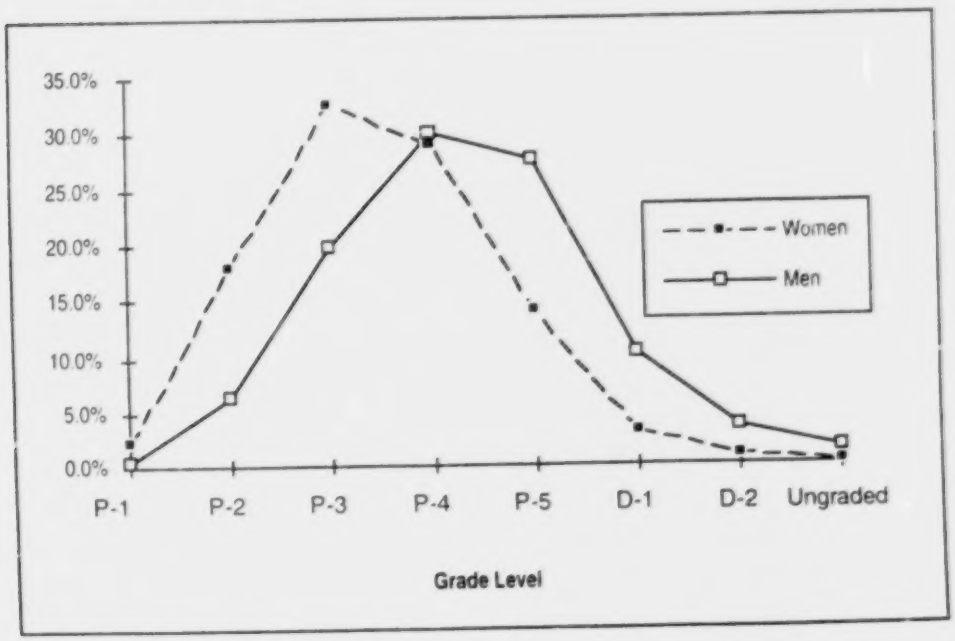

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Chart III. Percentage of women in United Nations system professional posts at various grade levels, at year-end 1987, 1990, and 1993

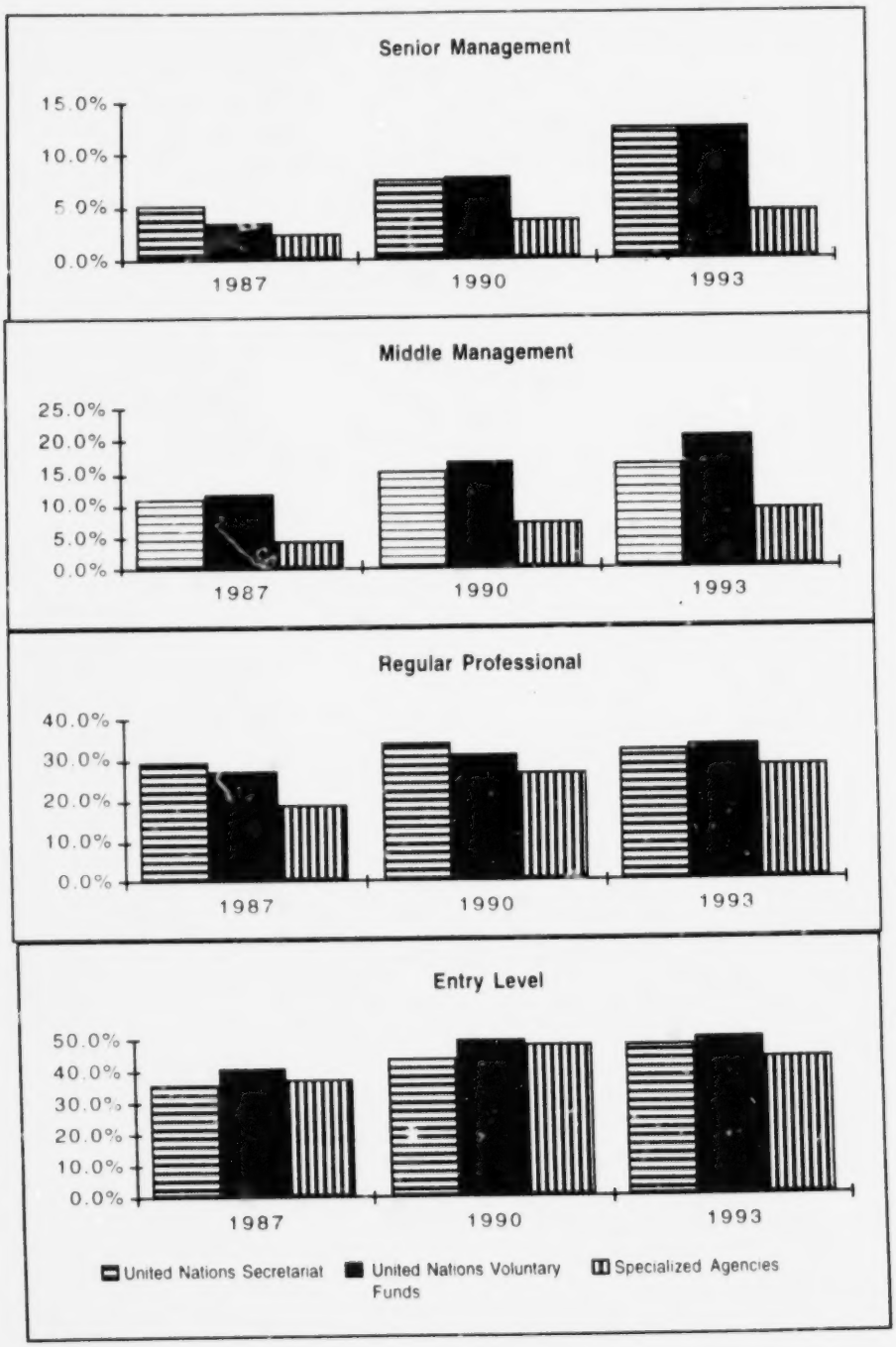

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Chart IV. Number of men and women appointed as professional-and-above project staff in the United Nations system from 1987 to 1993, by age upon appointment (7, 170 total: 6,223 men, 947 women)

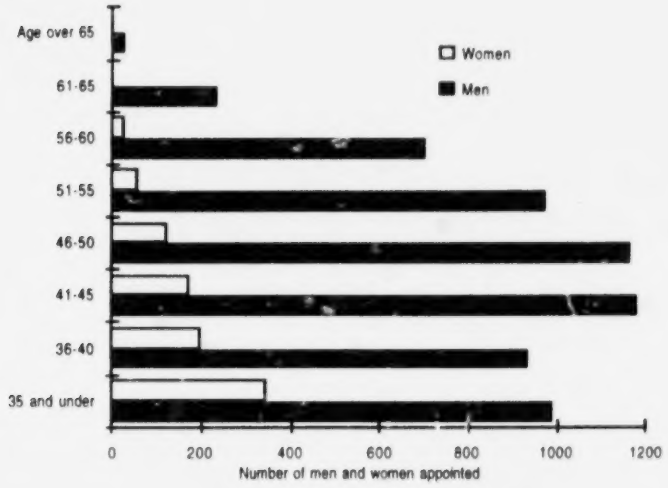
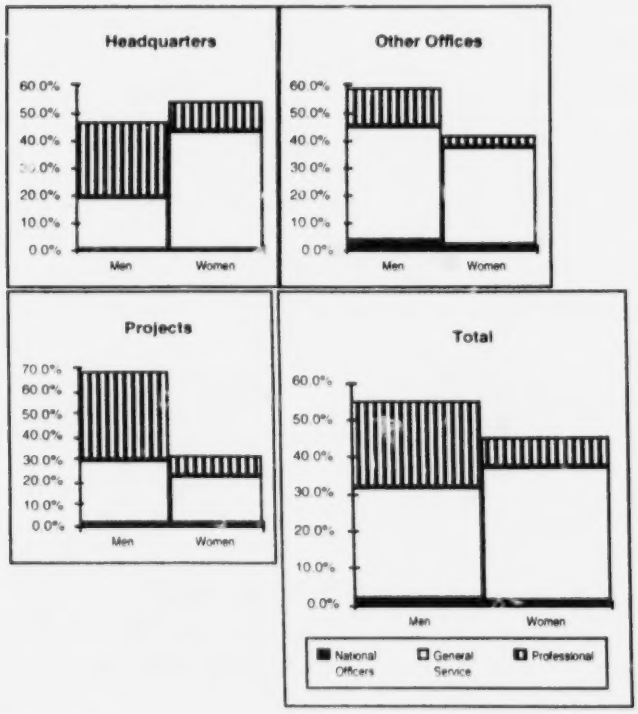


Chart V. Percentages of men and women staff in the United Nations system, in total and by geographic location and by category, as of 31 December 1993

Total number of staff by category: Headquarters (22,868), Other established offices (23,749), Project (8,329), Grand total (54,946)



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121. The 1985 report then presented an action programme, based on extensive consultations and analysis of the main problem areas. It sought to overcome the main obstacles to a "framework for change" for women's advancement by proposing work plans in five areas:

(a) **recruitment**: with technical measures and numerical targets, but concentrating on establishing the responsibility and defining the accountability of those who bring women into the organization and shape their careers;

(b) **career development**: to provide competent supervision, mentoring, training, rotation, and progressively challenging assignments (a process which, the Secretary-General concluded, appeared "in many instances to favor the career needs of men");

(c) **training**: to enhance staff awareness of complex interpersonal relationships in a multi-cultural environment, and to provide an understanding of the benefits which full participation of women in United Nations programmes would provide, all with "broad support and unambiguous example" from senior management;

(d) **work/family-related issues**: to build on improved spousal employment rules and lengthened maternity leave by addressing such issues as work scheduling, child care arrangements, and improved work environments, especially for General Service staff; and

(e) **grievance redress systems**: to review the adequacy of established mechanisms and instructions for grievances based on discrimination or sexual harassment.[67]

C. Actions needed

122. It is quite discouraging that the above work plan elements, which were identified by the United Nations and the ICSC in 1985, are still all required in 1995, and that the organizational obstacles that must be overcome are also still largely the same, both in the United Nations Secretariat and in most of the organizations of the System. The organizations have made some progress toward their numerical targets for professional women staff, but many of them still lack coherent programmes to change organizational cultures and establish management responsibility and commitment to improve women's status.

123. One can hope that the latest in a series of ACC policy commitments to improving women's status will help, because of its more specific and detailed character. But good intentions are not enough, as the past two decades have clearly shown. The organizations and their executive heads must pay much more attention to clarifying and overcoming the major institutional and attitudinal obstacles to improving women's status, establishing coherent action programmes in each organization, developing and using clear measures of progress made, and establishing transparency and the accountability of executive heads, personnel offices, and programme managers for results achieved. The Inspector believes that decisive actions are needed in the following areas, and (as discussed in the final subsection) that those most directly interested in improving women's status can and must also provide a very vigorous stimulus to the entire process.

1. Implementing recruitment, placement, promotion, and career development policies

124. The 1995 ACC statement recognized the need to fully implement existing policies for improving women's status, develop new initiatives for women at senior levels, make the

process a policy priority, and ensure top management commitment to this effort. The ACC statement further:

(a) called for action plans with clear, specific, short-term targets, preferably at the unit level, and stated executive heads' intent to hold senior managers accountable for implementing these policies and attaining the targets;

(b) promised efforts to increase recruitment flexibility for women; remove obstacles to their recruitment, retention, promotion and mobility; and create a supportive environment;

(c) agreed to consider special recruitment measures, such as treating all women staff in the System as internal candidates when they apply for vacant posts in any organization; to request agency field offices to seek women candidates in all disciplines; and to request Member States submitting candidates to include at least one qualified woman or more for each position; and

(d) in order to encourage mobility, agreed to consider developing a system for women's inter-agency mobility; facilitating spousal employment by changing staff rules where necessary; and to encourage spousal employment opportunities with other organizations and at each System location.

125. The Inspector finds these commitments most welcome, and would urge the following efforts as well. To begin with, much useful information on improving women's status already exists. Two inter-agency colloquia arranged by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) put forward sensible action recommendations, insights, and strategies in the 1970s which are still valid.[68] The ICSC Secretariat has prepared very relevant reports, particularly in 1985 and 1992, which analyze the status of women and present special measures for their recruitment.[69] And the United Nations Secretariat has had a sequence of special actions, even if imperfectly implemented, as outlined and documented in the 1994 JIU report on women's status in the Secretariat.[70]

126. The importance of holding managers accountable if any action plan is to succeed must also be underscored. For instance, when the General Assembly called for a transparent and effective system of accountability in the United Nations secretariat by January 1995, it specified that it should include "a mechanism ensuring that programme managers are accountable for the effective management of the personnel and financial resources allocated to them" (underscoring added).[71] The quality of managers' implementation of action plans for women's status is clearly one of these performance and accountability elements.

127. Top management in each organization must also explain very clearly to all staff why the improvement of the status of women staff is sought, since there are many misunderstandings and some very strong emotions on this point. The major reasons for improving women's status include:

(a) to effectively implement the requirements of the United Nations Charter and other legislative instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979;

(b) to ensure the equitable treatment that is the hallmark of any healthy organization;

(c) to bring women's experience and perceptions (which are different from men's) to play in the Organization's work;

(d) to enlist women's managerial skills (more emphasis on teamwork and cooperative problem-solving, which is increasingly advocated in modern management, in contrast to the old (male) authoritarian military hierarchy);

(e) to have women staff available to implement programmes for women, particularly in "grassroots" operational projects for communities;

(f) to give the organization full access to the other half of the world's human resources pool;

(g) to seek commitment for the improvement of women's status from a broader base of management; and

(h) to enhance the System's overall credibility by demonstating that it practices what it preaches.

128. The Inspector endorses the ACC call for action plans with clear targets and managerial accountability. She wishes, however, to stress the importance of:

(a) formulating action plans in a coherent and systematic way (rather than as a mere set of targets and ad hoc activities);

(b) communicating them to all staff in a clear way; and

(c) ensuring that subsequent progress is assessed in an orderly and transparent process.

129. Those agencies which have already made considerable progress can concentrate their action plans more on the urgent problem of the absence of women in policy and management positions. UNDP, for instance, has recently developed a policy on gender balance in management. The policy states that UNDP gender balance is necessary for equity, for credible human development leadership, for programme quality and relevance, and for a revitalized and competitive UNDP workforce. It establishes a process of three-year targets with success indicators, lists the specific responsibilities and actions required of senior management and the Division of Personnel, and cites the monitoring role of the UNDP Gender in Development programme and an informal group of senior women.

130. However, other organizations still need to formulate action plans. Recent IAEA experience provides a useful example to follow. In response to resolutions of its General Conference, IAEA obtained a cost-free expert from a Member State for six months during 1994 to develop practical strategies to improve women's status and representation within existing policies and available resources. The expert conducted detailed analyses and consultations to identify root causes of the barriers to improving women's status and representation, and then developed six specific goals and eleven specific action programmes to reduce the identified barriers. Subsequently, the Division of Personnel and a staff sub-committee on women's issues has prepared a draft comprehensive action plan and a new recruitment package.

131. Other organizations, including the United Nations, UNIDO, and ILO have recently used, or are now using, expert consultants to analyze their existing processes for the advancement of women. The Inspector believes that this type of external and knowledgeable diagnosis can be very beneficial in stimulating new approaches and perceptions in the organizations' programmes for women staff, and urges them all to consider similar action.

132. The IAEA also recognizes the importance of interpersonal networking worldwide to expand recruitment pools and identify well-qualified women in its highly specialized area

of nuclear science and related specialities. Both IAEA and WHO are already using Internet (the rapidly-growing global computer network with some 30 million participants) to disseminate "bulletin board" information on vacant positions, application forms, and employment conditions to female professionals worldwide. Since a recent informal but knowledgeable assessment states that fully 80 per cent of all the world's scientists can now be reached on the Internet, and since computer literacy is an increasingly important skill requirement for System professional staff, the other highly-specialized agencies (and System agencies in general) should also consider using the Internet as an important new channel for recruitment.

133. If the organizations are to take human resources management seriously and professionally, they must also move beyond the basic "numbers game" to carefully study and systematically analyze the actual situations, underlying problems and constraints, needs, and attitudes of their women and other staff. Some personnel offices have improved their basic analytical statistics on staff characteristics, career patterns, and progressions. Unfortunately, this information is not yet often communicated to staff. However, an annual IAEA report to its Board of Governors is again a welcome exception, containing not only the usual detailed statistics but informative discussions of problems encountered and specific steps taken, as well as very clear summary graphs and charts.[72] A few organizations have also made systematic staff surveys of workplace and career quality issues. Much more is needed.

134. Internal management improvement and oversight units can make an important contribution. A February 1995 evaluation of the advancement of women in the UNESCO Secretariat provides a very thorough statistical and factual analysis of actions taken and problems to be dealt with. It provides 26 recommendations to establish relevant and reliable information bases for women's advancement and concrete measures to improve the status of professional women.[73]

135. Staff groups can also do their part. For instance, a detailed 1995 FAO survey, based on responses from 240 professional staff, reviewed indicators of women staff representation, working conditions impeding women's recruitment and retention, and perceptions of attitudes within the organization. A FAO/WFP staff group also recently surveyed conditions for women in National or out-posted Field Offices including sexual harassment, health-related, security and lodging, family and other issues. Both these surveys contain useful and detailed strategies and suggestions for systematically addressing the problems found.[74]

136. In addition, advisory staff groups can play a useful oversight and stimulus role where they do not yet exist. For instance, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) recently established a Gender Issues Board to advise the Executive Director and the Focal Point on Gender Issues on all gender-related issues in UNEP, including taking its own initiatives, and to monitor equity issues and programmes for incorporating gender issues in UNEP work and activities.

137. All these steps can help, but in the end the only way to ensure that "nice words" are transferred into "effective actions" is systematic follow-up. The executive heads in the ACC have now clearly stated their determination to make women's advancement a policy priority, and to take the necessary measures to improve women's status. It is particularly important that they regularly assess and report on progress made, and accept their direct responsibility (and hold their programme managers accountable as well) for ensuring that

the action plans are in fact established and carried out, in each organization and System-wide.

138. It is worth remembering as well why continued efforts to improve the status of women, and the ACC action plans, are being undertaken, especially since some males in the System are very disturbed at what they see as "reverse discrimination." In addition to the reasons already listed, the statistical analyses presented in this Chapter are strong indicators that a lack of equal opportunity, and possible discriminatory patterns against women, do exist. Further, the System organizations need to honor, and to act upon, the United Nations Charter insistence on equal rights and participation of women "with no restriction", as well as the requirements of the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

139. Equally importantly, the organizations must demonstrate that they are credible "human development" advocates, that they conduct an open and equal opportunity workplace, and that they are striving to carry out strong programmes for Member States by attracting and maintaining the best possible workforce, drawn from all segments of global society. For all these reasons, the System needs a good faith effort to, quite simply, ensure that women have equal opportunity to work for, and advance within, the System organizations. (It must also be remembered that many parts of the United Nations system have "geographic distribution" quota systems for professional staff recruitment based on national and regional origin, which are long-established and often quite tightly and elaborately applied. The JIU is reviewing this topic as part of its 1995 work programme).

140. The Inspector also notes with disappointment that "gender statistics" have not yet really arrived in the United Nations system, as shown by significant gaps in the System-wide statistics maintained by CCAQ as discussed in section B. above, such as the partial data on the distribution of women staff according to the Common Classification of Occupational Groups (CCOG).

141. The implementation of CCOG coding has generally been satisfactory in System organizations, and the CCAQ already has the capacity to analyze and report data by CCOG for those organizations who are applying this coding system in their personnel data banks. The problem is that CCOG data is not really being used yet for many significant human resource planning purposes in the United Nations system. The data must become more consistent, accurate, and sophisticated if it is to provide, among other things, a real measurement tool for tracking improvement in the status of women.

142. The new ACC commitment to improve women's status, as well as the pressure to establish professional human resources management throughout the System, requires much more complete and consistent data. The Inspector recommends that the System organizations work with CCAQ to expand their use of the CCOG data on a consistent basis to provide gender and other statistics needed for proper human resource planning and analysis purposes in the United Nations common system.

2. Staff training and guidance

143. Staff training is critically important to build staff awareness of interpersonal and gender issues, and allow the benefits of women's full participation in an organization's

work. The fundamental problem, as discussed in the 1995 JIU accountability report, is that most of the organizations still have very limited management and staff development training programmes in general.[75] This situation is gradually changing. UNICEF, for example, has introduced gender/diversity awareness into its management training in such areas as New Representative Briefings and its "Women as Leaders" initiative. UNIDO has also organized workshops and seminars focusing on intercultural and gender issues in management, including mixed gender team-building. However, most organizations have not yet been able to develop and present even a module (a session or perhaps a half day) on "diversity", "multiculturalism", or "gender" issues in their staff training, and to provide this training to a significant proportion of their total staff.

144. It is important that all the organizations develop some type of staff training on gender matters, however modest. The need for increasing staff awareness, however, is too urgent for the organizations to wait for still more years to pass until they will have development training programmes for all staff, if ever. Since there is often considerable misunderstanding and misinformation circulating in the secretariats about "non-action for women" or, conversely, a "freeze" on all opportunity for men, everyone needs to understand clearly what is being done, why, and how.

145. The Inspector recommends that each organization fill the long-standing "awareness" gap by issuing a concise, non-technical circular or instruction explaining its policies, plans, and actions on the various elements for improving women's status discussed in this Chapter. The 1995 ACC statement by executive heads on women's status and action plans, which specifically cited the need for a "fostering of the necessary attitudinal changes", provides a very logical basis for issuing such guidance to staff.

3. General Service and other neglected groups of women

146. It is understandable that much attention has focused on increasing the number of women professional staff. They provide, through direct entry or eventually through career development, the future leadership of an organization, which will be most influential in improving the status of women overall. However, problems in other categories of staff have been lost sight of because of this emphasis.

147. The most prominent example is General Service staff: ACC statistics show that fully 34,000 of the some 52,000 United Nations system staff - some 65 per cent - are General Service and other categories, and the distinct majority of this staff, and particularly secretaries, are women. Yet throughout the System relatively little has been done to analyze the situations and respond to the needs of General Service staff, although they are the "backbone" of the organizations and carry out many critical operational functions. Although there are long-standing rationales for the present dual structure, it nevertheless establishes a clear and unfortunate divide within the System between the international professional staff (predominantly men) and the General Service staff (predominantly women).

148. As "office workers", General Service staff operate at the bottom of the hierarchy, with little recognition of their contributions to their workgroups and limited career development planning. While some such staff, particularly women secretaries, are still utilized as rather inactive but decorative "outer office" adjuncts to senior officials (usually

men), many others are often called on to work well beyond their established duties, and may have large amounts of unwanted work dumped on their desks. In addition, some of these staff may have excellent professional and experience credentials well above those of some people in the "professional staff" category, but they are trapped in the General Service category with severely constrained career horizons. Furthermore, the rapid spread of information technology and movement toward the "paperless office" not only raises the sophistication of General Service work but threatens displacement of staff engaged in traditional paperwork functions.

149. The 1972 UNITAR colloquium noted decades ago that General Service women have many important problems and grievances: some are those of professional women, but others are different and require special study.[76] A United Nations Steering Committee for women noted in 1991 that it had made quite specific recommendations in 1986, which the Secretary-General had approved, relating to restructuring and remedies for the secretarial occupation, opportunities for movement to the professional category, and studies of examination processes. However, no action had been taken.[77]

150. Most recently, a UNDP staff/management working group on General Service matters made an extensive review in 1994, in which UNFPA staff also participated. This review led to 95 recommendations on all aspects of General Service work, including recruitment and placement, performance and assessment, communication, job descriptions and classification, training and development, counselling, outplacement, promotions, teamwork, communication, feedback, resource redeployment, accountability, a unified personnel structure, social benefits, and education grants.[78] Feedback is now being developed on corrective actions needed.

151. Human resources management is not confined to professional staff only, but is intended to select, encourage, manage, and develop General Service and all other staff resources as well. The Inspector recommends that all organizations begin devoting much more specific attention to the needs and careers of these staff, both women and men. As one example, IAEA recently began a trial "Temporary Assignment Programme" to help General Service staff broaden their experience and explore career options, while assisting Departments in meeting staffing needs. By offering greater lateral mobility, this programme may be a useful and cost-effective way of responding to career development interests at a time when zero-growth policies restrict new posts and regular career growth avenues.

152. Women and staff in other categories should also not be forgotten. Problems also exist and need to be better analyzed, addressed, and acted upon for:

(a) national professional officers, who have become much more numerous in the organizations (some 1,600 at the end of 1993) as operational activities at the field level expand, and who are predominantly men;[79]

(b) various junior professional staff arrangements used by different organizations; and

(c) consultants and (some 8,000) project personnel, also predominantly men (this in turn involves many neglected sub-categories where women's participation needs to be assessed in agencies: for instance, the IAEA reports annually to its Member States on women's participation in technical cooperation. The data traces the percentage of women over the years among its fellows, visiting scientists, training course participants, project counterparts, international experts, national experts, lecturers, other project personnel, and technical cooperation Professional and General Service staff).

4. Combating sexual harassment

153. The issue of sexual harassment has received renewed attention throughout the United Nations system in the past few years. CCAQ endorsed a policy statement on the prevention of sexual harassment which was adopted by the ACC in 1993, and which was a major step forward at the inter-agency level.[80] Many - but not all - of the organizations have established their own policies and procedures. Many of these agencies informed the Inspector that they have had few cases of sexual harassment, and have dealt with them as they have arisen. This is a positive situation, although there is always a question of whether an organization has few harassment problems, is truly dealing with them, or instead is making it clear through various nuances that it does not in fact want staff to raise these matters.

154. Other organizations, however, have encountered implementation problems. The United Nations Secretariat, in particular, has had a few high-profile cases alleging sexual harassment by high-level officials, which have received and continue to receive negative international media attention. These cases involve long delays and great ambiguity about outcomes, which damage the credibility of the United Nations and raise doubts about the legitimacy of its basic disciplinary and accountability processes. Secretariat officials acknowledged these problems, and told the Inspector that they are currently reassessing their processes for handling sexual harassment problems. ECOSOC also requested the Secretary-General in 1994 to further develop comprehensive policy measures aimed at preventing sexual harassment, and to specifically ensure that an assessment of progress made in this area be provided to the CSW and to the General Assembly in 1995.[81]

155. As the organizations shift from pronouncements to implementation, they must state their policies on combating sexual harassment as clearly as possible, and be sure to communicate them to all staff. They must recognize that sexual harassment is a traumatic and humiliating experience for the victim (who is almost always a woman but may be a man, and who may also be the victim of same-sex harassment). Sexual harassment problems can also damage general staff morale and performance, and harm an organization's credibility and reputation as an attractive place to work.

156. More directly, in the larger organizations and particularly those with worldwide duty stations, operational changes are needed to implement the policies effectively. Several officials told the Inspector that gender problems at Headquarters are most often those of sexual discrimination, while those in the field are most often those of sexual harassment. Several organizations emphasized that successful handling of sexual harassment problems must involve confidentiality and counselling, together with prompt action to deal with cases once they arise. The seriousness of sexual harassment cases requires that those who deal with them clearly understand the policies and procedures of the organization, and have been trained in the personal skills required to handle these sensitive matters.

157. A number of organizations have processes for combating sexual harassment which have been established and functioning for several years now. One of the first such organizations, UNIDO, issued updated and strengthened guidance to all staff in 1994 which emphasizes the prevention of any form of discrimination based on gender, in accord with the United Nations Charter. It calls on staff to strictly observe the matters set out in its Information Circular, to avoid actions or words that would prevent full participation of any colleagues in UNIDO work, and to promote a harmonious working environment and enhance

conditions of equality and mutual respect. It presents guidelines (which stress inter alia that no job is an exclusive preserve of either sex) and then establishes specific procedures. These procedures emphasize that all allegations of sexual harassment will be fully, fairly, and promptly investigated and dealt with in as discreet a manner as possible. They lay out steps for both informal and formal procedural paths, and promise that the Director-General will act on any recommendation made by the UNIDO Panel on Discrimination and other Grievances within four weeks.[82]

158. Some further assistance may come from a greater concern with clarifying overall standards of behavior and the "highest standards of...integrity" which are demanded of all staff by Article 101 of the United Nations Charter. The existing Code of Conduct for United Nations system staff was formulated 40 years ago, and in 1994 the Secretary-General agreed with JIU that these standards do not reflect the responsibilities and circumstances that staff presently confront. The United Nations is now reviewing and updating the entire 1954 standards. Still other new trends are underway. The 1995 JIU report noted a new concern with policies and actions for recovery of funds in cases of negligent management and violation of rules, particularly by managers, as a "clear signal" to staff that they are responsible for the propriety of their actions.[83] Establishing and enforcing such codes, ethical standards, and performance discipline can only reinforce and support efforts to deal with sexual harassment throughout the System.

159. Thus, the sexual harassment problem is a particularly important part of the strong new emphasis on accountability throughout the United Nations system. Staff must be told as clearly as possible what behavior is considered acceptable and what is not, and management must emphasize the need for equitable and considerate treatment of co-workers. The organization must then ensure that its subsequent actions make the message clear: sexual harassment will not be tolerated.

5. Work/family issues

160. Work/family issues have long been talked about in the United Nations system. Recommendations made in 1985 by the ICSC and by the United Nations on its first action programme, for instance, discussed the need for action on many specific work/family measures that are now being highlighted once again. As in other areas of women's advancement, little progress has been made, and the ability to act at present is further complicated by financial pressures and economic uncertainties which create heavy pressure for cutting expenses in every area. At the same time, however, the new human resources management emphases and the intense competition which the System encounters in recruiting and retaining good staff make better work/family policies and procedures essential.

161. A 1992 report by a working group in the World Bank provides an excellent overview of the topic in an international organization context. The Bank study analyzed work/family policies and practices in various public and private organizations, surveyed a random sample of Bank staff and extensively reviewed recent literature on this topic in light of changing demographic and societal trends. It then presented recommendations for:

(a) alternative or reduced work schedules, and overcoming barriers to, and developing ways to implement, a more flexible working environment;

(b) creating a family-supportive working environment, involving family advisory services, spousal employment assistance, family-related leave provisions, child and elder care, and seminars and support groups; and

(c) implementation considerations, stressing work-family training for personnel officers, sensitivity training for managers and supervisors, a programme manager in this field, and the (minimal) costs and budget implications of the various recommendations made.[84]

162. Two elements should be cited that give work/family matters an extra urgency at this time in the United Nations system. The System's own publications - from the ILO - have emphasized the importance of workplace issues since 1981. The ILO Conditions of Work Digest, particularly in the last half-dozen years, has provided very extensive analyses which are highly relevant as the organizations strive to develop meaningful and effective policies to deal with workplace issues. The ILO publications include policy overviews and surveys of practices in such workplace areas as child care (1988), part-time work (1989), telework (1990), work schedules (1990), combating sexual harassment (1992), preventing stress at work (1992), and monitoring, surveillance and testing in the workplace (1993).[85] The 1994 issue, just being published, deals with maternity and work, while the 1995 issue will deal with the topic of working time. These analyses emphasize that the cost of workplace stress to organizations worldwide is growing, and that organizations need to take action to develop programmes which enhance their workers' health and productivity.

163. Second, as part of the increasingly operational nature of United Nations system activities, and the recent emphasis on decentralization of programmes to the "grassroots" level, more and more organizations are establishing requirements for staff mobility. The traditional idea of a System career spent doing 20 or 30 years of desk research at Headquarters is increasingly changing to a sequence of assignments in various field locations around the world, often in very demanding circumstances. While this new pattern provides stronger operational programmes and may well give a powerful sense of self-satisfaction and contribution, it also puts more and more stress on work/family situations. The pressure is greater for women than for men (as noted in the FAO/WFP staff studies cited in sub-section 1. above), and most difficult for women with children. (Several officials also noted that, in general, there is still a subtle but real intimidation on childcare matters in the organizations: while fathers/staff members may be commended for looking after their children, mothers/staff members run the risk of punishment and/or discrimination for raising such domestic issues and duties in the workplace).

164. In recognition of these emerging issues and their importance to good human resources management in the System, the CCAQ included an item on the work/family agenda at its session in April 1995. An excellent overview report stated that such an agenda would both respond to dramatic workplace changes and pressures, and help the System to reconcile work and family responsibilities for both genders in order to attract and retain the highest quality workforce. The report reviewed past System concerns expressed by the General Assembly, ICSC, and the ACC. It outlined developments outside the System, and summarized current System policies and practices, including very informative charts of work-family initiatives by organization. It concluded with recommendations to foster the recognition of work and family concerns without sacrificing organizational goals, for example by articulating a strategy and policy statement thereon, and holding managers accountable for its implementation.[86]

165. CCAQ recognized the need to stay informed of developments outside the United Nations system and to transform the common system workplaces into more family-friendly

environments. It intends to give priority attention to these issues over several future sessions. This will include consideration of an overall policy framework, greater flexibility in organizing working time, short-term paid leave for family-related reasons, strategies and mechanisms to facilitate spousal employment, and review of policies on salaries and entitlements to ensure that they are designed to respond to family needs.

166. A new UNDP/UNFPA Programme for Staff Assistance at New York Headquarters shows the growing importance of these issues and the type of commitment which the organizations will have to develop in some form in the future. This one-year pilot project is under contract with a non-profit employee development organization. It assists UNDP and UNFPA staff and their families, on a voluntary and confidential basis, with any personal concerns, such as child and elder care, financial and legal issues, personal or work-related stress, depression, or problems of addiction. The Programme provides information, assessment, short-term counselling, emergency intervention, and referral services.[87] While such "employee assistance programmes" are relatively new, they do already cover around 26 million people (including family members) in the United States, and are spreading in several European countries as well: they might therefore become a viable and valuable service for other System agencies in the future.

6. Dialogue and transparency

167. Many of the action problems discussed above highlight an important gap. Several personnel offices observed that the new human resources emphasis and the stress of modern organizational life require managers and personnel departments to establish much more meaningful communication, dialogue, and transparent policies with staff, not only on women's issues but for men as well on career, mobility, work/family and many other topics

168. A first requirement is for clear policies and their systematic communication to all staff. A notice on bulletin boards or a brief article in a staff journal is not enough: management must ensure that the guidance reaches all staff in a prompt fashion and continues to be updated and made available in an organized, fully accessible form - a personnel manual or a coherent and up-to-date set of administrative instructions. Equally importantly, the guidance must be clear and free of technical and bureaucratic jargon. Staff have a very deep and urgent interest in these matters and want to understand them fully without distortion and confusion. Management should also want to minimize gossip, rumor, and misunderstanding which can poison the organizational climate if sensitive issues, such as actions to improve women's status or to combat sexual harassment, are not being well communicated or understood.

169. The second requirement is for constructive dialogue with staff. This begins with regular discussions with staff representatives, but it also involves groups of concerned staff who work with management to analyze and explore pragmatic actions that can be taken on priority issues of staff concern. However, there is a further and equally important need for individual consultations between personnel officers and staff seeking clarifications, explanations, or guidance about career options and procedural requirements. This process puts a heavy burden on small personnel units. Nevertheless, it is more and more essential that personnel officers develop their professional and advisory capacities to deal with major problems that staff members encounter. This involvement is a core requirement of a true "human resources" system.

170. An important role in this process can be played by the staff counselors of the organizations. At their fifth meeting in Geneva in March 1995, under the auspices of CCAQ, they noted the general trends of organizations and staff expecting more services to be provided, and their own growing case load. The meeting concluded that counselling services were essential, especially for a largely expatriate workforce. They should therefore be made available to staff in all organizations by specialists through internal services, inter-agency arrangements at the same locale, or external services managed by an in-house specialist. They endorsed standards for evaluating staff counseling services, and discussed such issues as the work/family agenda, mission readiness and stress management training, alcohol/substance abuse, mental health policy, and unpaid financial obligations.[88]

7. "Downsizing"

171. The 1995 JIU accountability report observed that a troublesome but growing challenge for strategic management in the organizations of the System is the issue of "downsizing", i.e. the reduction of financial resources and staff. No System organization can take for granted that it will not be forced at some point to sharply curtail its operations, particularly since a majority of System programmes now depend on extra-budgetary or special contributions that can be withdrawn, delayed, or reduced at any time.

172. The JIU has the impression that most organizations have not yet prepared for this unpleasant eventuality, with the result that any such cutbacks could well do much needless damage. Yet some organizations have had to make significant staff reductions in the past, and currently organizations such as UNIDO, UNDP, and the United Nations itself are engaged in this painful process. Organizations need to approach the forced changes of downsizing with foresight and creativity, communicate clearly with staff at all stages of the process, and implement any cutbacks in a way that inflicts minimal damage on the organization, its staff, and its programmes.

173. Women staff are particularly vulnerable in this process, as a group trying to catch up and therefore subject to the hazards of "last-hired (or promoted), first-fired". The Inspector believes that an important part of improving women's status in the organizations must be the attempt to ensure that whatever gains women staff have made will be protected, and that women are not disproportionately affected, or discriminated against in any way, in downsizing, restructurings, and cutbacks which might be necessary in the future. Once again, justice and transparency are required to handle this situation well.

8. Governing body support and participation

174. Governing body support for the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariats is as uneven as that for substantive women's programmes (Chapter II.D.9), only more so. In contrast to the continuing concern and pressure exerted by the General Assembly and in some other bodies of the System, interest in advancing women's status in many other governing bodies is quite modest. Officials in a number of agencies noted that the issue is not always put on agendas, and when it is the topic receives very brief attention (although a lack of systematic and informative reporting by secretariats may also play an important part in this problem).

175. In these agencies, only a few delegations pay serious attention to women's status and progress, and this often involves only a few individuals on those delegations. When those people move on to other assignments in their government's service, the interest fades. Governing bodies normally take a very strong interest in personnel matters in general, particularly in questions of filling senior posts. In addition, in many organizations geographic distribution is a long-established personnel process of establishing equitable treatment. It is carefully debated, reported on, monitored, and revised, and quite elaborate methods and calculations are employed to ensure careful balance and numerical allocations. In contrast, assuring the equal status of women has received much less policy attention, monitoring, and transparency.

176. Again, the Inspector understands that the governing bodies have short sessions with many important issues to consider. But women's status is not only part of human resources management, nor of conforming to the United Nations Charter and the established international conventions. For the substantive reasons listed in section C.I above, the recruitment, advancement, and retention of women is essential to the fundamental effectiveness, operations, and credibility of the organizations and the System in serving both the "We the people" of the United Nations Charter, and the organizations' clients in all their specialized fields.

177. Moreover, governing bodies of the System are responsible not merely for policy and oversight in women's status. They themselves are, or must become, active participants in this improvement process. In terms of recruitment of women staff for the secretariats, the General Assembly has appealed to Member States of the System organizations to identify and nominate more qualified women, encourage more women to apply for vacant posts and examinations, and to create national rosters of women candidates.[89] In the 1995 ACC statement, executive heads agreed to consider, in cases where Member States are to submit candidatures, urging governments to submit at least one or more qualified female candidates for each position. Particularly at senior levels, this single step could go a great distance toward fulfilling the guidance of the United Nations Charter and other legislative instruments establishing equitable treatment and status for women throughout the United Nations system. The Inspector joins in urging Member States of all System organizations to take responsibility for presenting women candidates in the future as a consistent and normal process.

178. A most unusual but welcome arrangement is the Steering Committee on the Employment and Participation of Women in the work of WHO. Its members come from the WHO Executive Board, Secretariat technical programmes and administrative services, and staff groups. A senior official serves as Special Adviser, a post of Coordinator for Women's Participation is planned for the 1996-1997 budget to analyze and facilitate improved participation and strategies, and a Joint Committee is also active. The Inspector finds this WHO structure to be a quite promising way to more actively involve governing bodies with secretariats in working to improve the status of women.

179. As an even broader matter of policy implementation, Chapter II of this report observed that one of the continuing critical areas of concern for women's advancement, and one specified in the proposals for the Draft (May) Platform for Action for Beijing, is the sharing of power and the role of women in decision-making. A UNICEF/UNIFEM package on CEDAW observes that, despite some advances at local, national and international levels, gender discrimination remains a formidable barrier to women's participation in formal decision-making processes. Most of the decisions affecting the future of the planet are

being made without the input of half its inhabitants. Globally, women are all but invisible in formal political institutions.

- -- Women account for only 5 to 10 per cent of the world's political leadership;
- -- Worldwide, women hold only 10 per cent of parliamentary seats, and this total actually fell between 1989 and 1993;
- -- In 160 of 171 national parliaments in 1993, women held no more than 20 per cent of the seats: in 36 countries, they held no more than 4 per cent;
- -- At the ministerial level, women hold only 4 per cent of positions worldwide, and in more than 80 countries they hold no ministerial posts at all;
- -- At the end of 1990, only 6 of the 159 countries then represented in the United Nations had women as chief executives.[90]

180. The many bureaucratic barriers to programmes for women's advancement were outlined in Chapter II. The barriers and disincentives to women's participation in democratic institutions are just as numerous and strong. As identified in a new UNDP paper, they include the following.

- -- Only men are seen as real political actors, and leadership is identified with the male person and masculine behaviours and qualities;
- -- A community of interests between men and women is assumed, and women's consent taken as a given;
- -- Written commitments to social and gender equality from the executive or a national plan are lacking, thus hindering change;
- -- Women's political voices, views, demands and leadership are missing from the media and opinion polls;
- -- The culture of politics is masculine: the adversarial proceedings, coercion to conform to central interests, timing of meetings and sessions, pervasiveness of patronage, and the distance of politics from daily realities;
- -- Restricted entry into the legal profession and civil police and defence forces until recently has put women well behind in rising to senior levels;
- -- Women obtain unpaid public appointments and men those that are paid, and positions in community and local politics - where women predominate numerically - are largely non-transferable.[91]

181. International policy-making is also marked by very limited women's participation and very little transparency and data on women's status and representation. The UNITAR colloquia of the 1970s found that there were few women in governing bodies, delegations, and missions of Member States. Anecdotal and ad hoc data - for instance, the observation that in 1994 only 8 of 184 heads of missions to the United Nations were women - indicates that the situation has changed little. Officials in various secretariats also observed that at their governing body meetings women are conspicuous by their very small numbers: a reception for women delegates can often be held in a very small room.

182. One other important area, which has scarcely begun to be explored, is gender content, rather than the mere participation of women, in international decision-making. Recent analyses observe that the United Nations system legal, political, economic and human rights agenda is heavily skewed because of its domination by men. The corresponding need is to alter this situation to mainstream women's perspectives in the fundamental policy issues which the System addresses, and to make women's everyday experiences and perspectives a much more central part of global policy deliberations.[92]

183. The Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), in recognition of the continuing severity of this problem at all political levels worldwide, adopted a Plan of Action in 1994 to correct present imbalances in men and women's participation in political life.[93] The Plan notes that "40 years after adoption of the Convention on the Political Rights of Women and despite undeniable progress, political and parliamentary life remains dominated by men in all countries." It also states that the concept of democracy will only assume true and dynamic significance when men and women jointly decide policies and legislation.

184. The IPU report is drawn up with a worldwide approach and in the spirit of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies of 1985 and the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action on Human Rights of 1993. It specificies the necessary elements for women's active participation in political life, the legal basis for equality, and requirements for participation at the national level and in IPU activities. It also establishes a mechanism for regular follow-up and evaluation of the Plan, presents the key legislative instruments, and lists recent IPU publications on women's issues.

185. The Inspector believes that the governing bodies of the United Nations system can themselves play a direct role in improving women's status and participation. With the participation of the CSW and the active support of the General Assembly, she believes that the time has finally come for all the System's organizations to provide basic statistics on women's participation and leadership in their governing and intergovernmental bodies, in Member State delegations, and in Member State missions to the organizations. In this way, and with systematic follow-up to improve women's status, the governing bodies can accept their own accountability for improving women's status, lead the process of improving that status, and consider establishing a System-wide "action plan" in this critical area as well.

9. New approaches and new dynamism

186. Chapter II of this report highlighted the importance of new approaches, creativity, and participation by people inside and outside the United Nations system to better implement the System's future women's and gender programmes worldwide. The same fresh approaches and widespread participation are required to overcome the many stubborn barriers to the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system.

187. Although two decades of lackluster results are indeed discouraging, a number of knowledgeable officials observed that the status of women in the System is now approaching the "critical mass" level of about 30 percent professional-and-above staff, beyond which the improvement in women's status might accelerate much more quickly. The responsibility lies not just with executive heads, personnel departments, and programme managers, but with all women and women's groups (and men) who wish to see the equity called for by the United Nations Charter become reality.

188. Many officials suggested actions that can be taken to move the status quo in new directions, including the following. The Inspector is sure that there are many more, and there is an urgent need to develop, express, and apply them.

189. Much more data and analysis is needed on the real problems, barriers, attitudinal difficulties, and obstacles to women's status which actually exist in the organizations. In this respect such initiatives as the recent consultant reports on action programme needs

made for several organizations, the extensive surveys done by FAO and FAO/WFP staff, the new evaluation of improving women's status in UNESCO, and the joint assessment of General Service work in UNDP need to be more widely shared among organizations, and emulated through similar projects in other organizations.

190. As noted earlier, much more needs to be done to develop and utilize **more meaningful gender statistics** in human resource programmes, and to find better measures to fairly and consistently gauge women's progress (such as, for instance, weighting the relative seniority of women in assessing women's overall representation in professional and above staff ranks in each organization). Many good ideas are available, stretching back to the UNITAR colloquia of the 1970s, which need to be pulled together and further developed. Outside consultants or research organizations could also play an important role in developing practical measures to move forward decisively in this area.

191. Given the struggles often required to appoint women to highly-prized higher level posts, perhaps the best additional way to bring more women into the organizations is to concentrate on finding qualified women and hiring them equitably (i.e., at around the 50 per cent level) to **fill the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) and Associate Professional Officer (APO) posts** which many organizations have. At this level, women can truly show what they can do, as a sound performance basis for movement into a full professional career.

192. The slow expansion of management development training throughout the System should not be used as a rationale for the widespread lack of **at least some form of minimal gender or sensitivity training for all staff**. The ignorance of gender issues and problems is still far too pervasive in most organizations, and is a critical barrier to the improvement of women's status. A few programmes are now established: many more are needed.

193. Most of the matters discussed in this report are **far too "headquarters-centered."** Much more attention must be paid by executive heads, personnel offices, and others to improving women's status and dealing with their particular problems in other established offices, field offices, projects, and emergency operations, particularly as the organizations decentralize more and more activities to the field and increase their mobility requirements.

194. Similarly, women's and related interest groups **need to "network" much more** with each other to exchange ideas and experiences and keep up with new developments, among different organizations at the same duty stations around the world and among different offices in the same organization. A considerable amount of information is transferable, and women's subgroups in the organizations could make their interests and needs known in a much stronger fashion than they do at present - if they will work more actively together.

195. **Clearing-house functions** are very much needed to facilitate knowledge of innovations in women's action programmes and advocacy group activities around (and from outside) the United Nations system. The continuing analysis of women's issues by ICSC and the CCAQ, as well as (to a lesser degree) the work of the DAW, the system-wide network of designated women's "focal points", and the Inter-Agency Meeting, could be important to help draw together and then disseminate new approaches and "best practice" for consideration by the organizations.

196. Finally, **building bridges to governing bodies** on this issue is very important. The new Steering Committee on the Employment and Participation of Women in the work of WHO is a very positive example of joint governing body/staff efforts to improve women's

status. The Global Commission on Women's Health recently established by WHO and the new Consultative Committee on Women of UNESCO seem also to have considerable potential to help overcome the limited awareness and involvement of so many governing bodies in women's programmes and status.

/...

IV. FOCAL POINT ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

"The participation of women, in sufficient numbers and at levels that make a difference in decision-making and in all aspects of the work of the United Nations - as staff members and governmental representatives - is fundamental to shaping the role of the Organization as set out in its Charter."

-- *Report of the Secretary-General on the status of women in the United Nations Secretariat, February 1995*

A. Opportunities and status

197. Chapters II and III have reviewed in some detail actions needed to enhance the work of the United Nations system in both its substantive programmes for women's advancement and its action programmes for the improvement of the status of women in the organizations. This study would not be complete, however, without returning to those units identified at the beginning of Chapter II (and in Annex I) - the CSW, CEDAW, DAW, UNIFEM, and INSTRAW - which are the only ones within the System exclusively devoted to women's and gender issues.

198. These entities are well-established, in the case of the CSW and DAW for half a century. They have made very significant contributions over the years to women's advancement worldwide. The Fourth World Conference on Women, however, provides a critical juncture at which to take stock of their past policies and operations, and determine how best to revitalize, redirect, and manage them in a way which will provide new leadership and a commitment to pragmatic action, an emphasis on results, and transparency and clear accountability.

199. These organizations need to carefully assess their resources, activities, operations, and directions. Even more importantly, they are critical focal points for the entire United Nations system and its interaction with all the ongoing women's programmes worldwide. Their creativity and effectiveness will have a powerful impact on the future work of the United Nations system on women's and gender issues.

200. As is true system-wide in the substantive and women's status areas, the improvement of the work of these United Nations entities should be facilitated by recent accountability and human resources management trends. The strong policy leadership and commitment of the current Secretary-General is indicated by the above quotation and many similar statements he has made. The Secretariat, at the request of the General Assembly, also installed a new organization-wide system of accountability and responsibility at the beginning of 1995, and is developing a new strategy to "modernize and re-energize" human resources management. Both these sweeping initiatives are recognized as important elements of a long-term effort to change the old "organizational culture" of the Organization.

B. Actions needed

201. In light of the opportunities for reflection and redirection afforded by the Beijing conference, the proposals in the Draft Platform sections on institutional and financial arrangements, and the major management reforms and improvements noted above, the Inspector is convinced that the following actions are urgently needed to ensure that the

United Nations focal point entities for women's advancement can help implement the System's future programmes for women with maximum effectiveness.

1. CSW role

202. The proposals for the Draft (May) Platform for Action for the Fourth World Conference tentatively invite the General Assembly and ECOSOC to review the CSW mandate. They also tentatively state that the CSW should have a central role in monitoring the implementation of the Platform and advising ECOSOC thereon, with a clear mandate and financial support for this regular monitoring function and for coordinating reports on implementation with relevant agencies and various regional and national focal points. To aid this work, the CSW should receive monitoring reports, including reports from organizations of the United Nations system. It could thus become the gender analysis arm of ECOSOC, and help strengthen the Council's policy coordination function. The Draft Platform proposals also tentatively call on the CSW to provide follow-up on the World Conference, including gender analysis of critical issues before the United Nations. It must be emphasized that all this language concerning the CSW is bracketed in the proposals for the Draft Platform: i.e., it has not been agreed upon.[94]

203. The Inspector feels that this updated role for the CSW is very appropriate to allow it to exercise its focal point role by actively tracking actual developments and progress - or lack of progress - at various key points throughout the System. The emphasis on detailed programme review is also very important to allow the CSW to keep track of actual results and problems being encountered, policy additions made at subsequent global conferences, and programme changes and adjustments needed to keep the programmes for women's advancement as sharply and transparently focused on accountability and impact as possible.

204. The CSW has, throughout its long history, taken decisive and innovative action at critical junctures. The present time is once again such a pivotal point. The Inspector believes that by exerting its leadership role in encouraging the establishment of the management changes and processes called for in this report, and then assessing progress on a continuing basis, the CSW can support the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system in overcoming the bureaucratic obstacles and inertia now too often found. The System can then move decisively forward with pragmatic actions to advance women's and gender actions worldwide.

2. DAW resources and programme

205. The proposals for the Draft (May) Platform for Action for the Fourth World Conference cite the primary function of DAW as providing substantive servicing to CSW, CEDAW, and other intergovernmental bodies when they are concerned with the advancement of women. In addition, DAW is recognized as the focal point for implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies. The Draft Platform proposals call for the functions of DAW to be assessed in light of the review of the mandate of the CSW, and tentatively request the Secretary-General to ensure more effective DAW functioning by providing sufficient financial and human resources within the United Nations regular budget. The Draft Platform also calls on the Division to:

(a) undertake gender analysis of obstacles to women's advancement in preparing policy studies for CSW;

(b) play a coordinating role in revising the 1996-2001 system-wide medium-term plan for women after the Beijing conference; and to

(c) continue to serve as the secretariat for inter-agency coordination for the advancement of women; and maintain a flow of information with national commissions, national institutions for the advancement of women, and NGOs in implementing the Platform for Action.[95]

206. The Inspector finds the present DAW to be, unfortunately, the classic women's unit in the United Nations system: underfunded, understaffed, undergraded, and largely unnoticed by the world at large. She wishes to make the following observations about DAW resources to indicate the seriousness of its resource problem, and to encourage some form of corrective action.

207. The DAW does not even really qualify as a United Nations "division". It lacks a senior Director (D-2) head, and has only 12 professional-and-above staff posts, instead of the minimum established number of 15. (The proposed programme budget for 1996-1997 does provide for a Director D-2 post as of 1996, which would make a total of 13 professional-and-above staff and 7 general service posts: at present DAW is temporarily under the supervision of the Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women). The Division had the minimum 15 posts a decade ago, but despite Member States' doubts about the adequacy of its staffing, an increasing workload has been absorbed in its decreased staff level. The Division certainly cannot meet any additional responsibilities with its present staffing.

208. Further, the DAW is woefully undergraded: fully half of its 12 total professional staff posts (including extra-budgetary) are at the P-2 entry level, which makes it perhaps the lowest-graded division in the entire United Nations Secretariat. Despite its essential responsibilities for mainstreaming women's and gender issues throughout the United Nations Secretariat, it is only one of several divisions within one of three large departments dealing with United Nations operational activities for development, and separated from such areas of major importance to women as human rights and humanitarian assistance.

209. Much is made, and properly so, of the fact that human rights receives less than one per cent of the total United Nations budget. The DAW budget of $3,400,000 for the 1994-1995 biennium, however, represents a paltry .0013 per cent of the total (approved) $2,580,000,000 United Nations regular budget for 1994-1995. This amount - one-eighth of one per cent - falls pathetically short of the some 50 per cent of the world's population - the women - whom this programme is intended to serve as a critical implementing focal point.

210. Finally, even though the DAW supports two intergovernmental bodies - the CSW and CEDAW - it has far weaker staffing than almost all other United Nations divisions, programmes, and centres which provide servicing and support to commissions, treaty bodies, and/or periodic global conferences in the economic, social, and human rights fields. As shown in the following table, all the other divisions have from two to six times as many professional-and-above staff as the DAW (except for crime control). All have more Director-level staff (except crime control and social development). Only social development has as many low-level professional posts as does the DAW (one third of total professional-and-above staff at P2/P1). All of the global subject areas listed in this table are important, but four world conferences on women have done nothing to move the staff resources devoted to the women's programme from the very bottom of this United Nations resource list.

COMPARATIVE STAFFING OF UNITED NATIONS DIVISIONS, PROGRAMMMES, AND CENTRES SUPPORTING INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMISSIONS AND TREATY BODIES IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND HUMAN RIGHTS FIELDS

	USG/ ASG	D-2	D-1	P-5	P-4	P-3	P-2/1	Total
Centre for Human Rights	1	1	4	8	23	32	15	84
Statistical Division		1	6	10	17	18	17	69
Global Development Policy		2	6	7	19	7	10	51
Centre for Human Settlements	1	1	3	6	15	16	6	48
International Drug Control	1	1	2	6	13	11	9	43
Transnational Corporations			3	9	6	8	5	31
ECOSOC Affairs and Inter-Agency Coordination Division		1	3	8	8	8	2	30
Population Division		1	2	6	5	9	3	26
Sustainable Development (two programmes)		2	4	6	7	3	3	25
Social Development (two programmes)		1	1	2	8	3	7	22
Crime control			1	2	6	4	1	14
Division for the Advancement of Women			**2**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**4**	**12**

Source: United Nations proposed programme budget 1994-1995 (document A/48/6/Rev.1), (includes only regular budget, established, professional-and-above posts).

211. The Inspector presents this data to shed some light on the very feeble position from which the proposals for the Draft Platform tentatively encourage "sufficient financial and human resources" for the DAW. From the impoverished current level, particularly relative to similar commissions serviced, as noted above, it would seem that at least a doubling of resources would be eminently justified and long-overdue after the Fourth World Conference, even in a time of severe resource constraints. As an irreducible minimum, however, the Inspector encourages Member States and the Secretary-General to at least restore the level of 15 professional staff posts which the DAW had a decade ago, with all of them funded from the regular budget and at senior professional levels.

212. In light of the management, accountability, and other issues highlighted throughout this report, and recognizing that such detailed decisions must be made by the Secretary-General and the Division, the Inspector further believes that the additional five professional staff posts (added to the present 10 regular budget professional staff) should concentrate on five high-priority functions as follows:

(a) one should work full-time on system-wide programming and monitoring issues, streamlining and supporting the related inter-agency efforts, and carefully following and

correlating the many global conference commitments to women and related governing body policy resolutions, which the proposals for the Draft Platform rightly identify as a "crucial" coordination step;[96]

(b) one should work full-time in developing attractive new publications, media exposure, computerized material for Internet and CD-ROM use, oversight and upgrading of the present part-time efforts to maintain the Women's Information System (WIS) of DAW, and consultative assistance to other parts of the System on innovative and collaborative initiatives in women's information services and products worldwide;

(c) one should work full-time on efforts to interact more systematically with NGOs to advance, implement, publicize, and monitor progress toward the strategic objectives of the Platform for Action and mechanisms for women's advancement worldwide;

(d) one should work full-time on mainstreaming gender issues in other major areas of United Nations programmes, as foreseen by the proposals for the Draft Platform and as already begun with the Centre for Human Rights (see item 4. below); and

(e) one should be assigned to strengthen the servicing of CEDAW work (again, see item 4. below).

213. As these indicative functions indicate, the Inspector believes that DAW should continue its work on policy analysis and research for the CSW, but develop as well a much stronger emphasis on activities that will allow it to truly exercise a catalytic and leading managerial role for the United Nations system. The above functions and staff would concentrate, above all, on acting as a system-wide catalyst, in conjunction with the implementation responsibilities of each organization, to provide firm accountability for the implementation, results, and new pragmatic actions of the United Nations system for the advancement of women.

3. DAW location

214. As noted, the proposals for the Draft (May) Platform for Action identify the DAW as the substantive servicing body for the CSW, CEDAW, and other intergovernmental bodies when relevant, and call for assessing its functions in light of the review of the mandate of the CSW. Any decision on changing the location of the DAW must be made by the General Assembly and the Secretary-General after the Fourth World Conference. However, since the Division is presently buried deep within one of many departments of the sprawling and complex United Nations Secretariat, and since the Inspector heard some talk of fitting the DAW into other units, she wishes to identify a "maximal" and a "minimal" case for future DAW location.

215. The optimum relocation of the DAW to ensure women's advancement would be in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and reporting directly to him, an idea which the Inspector commends for consideration in light of the following rationale. Every United Nations programme, of course, would like to achieve this top-level location and status, and obviously they cannot have it. The women's programmes, however, are quite "special" in this regard:

(a) as the Secretary-General's quote at the beginning of this Chapter indicates, women's programmes, with their essential requirement of mainstreaming gender issues, perspectives, and equitable staffing across all United Nations programmes, do require an organization-wide approach;

(b) the introduction to this report noted the General Assembly's strong operational emphasis on participative and "grassroots" activities worldwide, and the central role which

women and women's groups around the world must play in the effective implementation of any such approach;

(c) few other programmes are specifically called for in the United Nations Charter, or have gone through (soon to be) four world conferences, years of specific General Assembly resolutions, and two decades of action programmes with such limited results, which underscores the need for dramatic action now to revitalize United Nations efforts;

(d) few if any other programmes relate so directly to Secretariat human resources and governmental decision-making (as the introductory quote above states), so that a top-level location would assist the Secretary-General into pursuing true participatory development, gender mainstreaming throughout United Nations programmes, and equity in Secretariat staffing and governing body representation all at the same time;

(e) this location could be transitory: the very impermanence of the process would call continuing attention to making the progress necessary to allow programmes for the advancement of women to return to regular programme status because gender processes had finally been established in substantive programmes Secretariat-wide, and equity in staffing and governing bodies was no longer a target but an emerging reality.

216. The Inspector was pleased to note that the revised proposals for the Draft (May) Platform for Action added firm statements on this issue of direct, top-level responsibility. They state first that responsibility for implementation of the Platform for Action and integration of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system must rest at the highest levels. The Draft Platform proposals then tentatively call for consideration of a "high level post in the office of the Secretary General" to advise him in his oversight of the integration of gender concerns throughout the United Nations system, achievement of gender integration goals, and to address United Nations action in all fields. They also request the Secretary-General to assume responsibility for coordinating policy within the United Nations for implementing the Platform and mainstreaming a system-wide gender perspective into all United Nations activities, and call on him to consider specific measures to ensure effective coordination in implementing these objectives.[97]

217. At a "minimal" level, the Inspector was told that some decision-makers are considering the possibility of incorporating the DAW elsewhere, perhaps among the various activities under the Commission on Sustainable Development, or perhaps as a part of the Centre for Human Rights. The Inspector believes that it is clear, however, that because of the cross-cutting nature of women's and gender issues and the mainstreaming approach, and the maintenance of at least the "identity and status" which it has in its present location in the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, it would be a grave mistake to incorporate it under some other single programme area.

4. Other United Nations entities (CEDAW, human rights, INSTRAW, UNIFEM, regional commissions)

218. The proposals regarding institutional arrangements in the Draft (May) Platform of Action discuss not only the CSW and DAW, but CEDAW, UNIFEM and INSTRAW, and the United Nations regional commissions as well. The decisions again must be made by the Secretary-General and the General Assembly, but the Inspector wishes to note some substantive and managerial aspects involved.

219. CEDAW and human rights: The Draft (May) Platform calls for the ability of CEDAW to monitor implementation of the Convention to be strengthened, tentatively including

human and financial resources financed by the regular budget, expert legal assistance, and sufficient meeting time for the work of the Committee. It also states that CEDAW should increase its co-ordination with other human rights treaty bodies, and in implementing the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action on human rights.[98]

220. There are some suggestions that CEDAW might move to Geneva under the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Inspector can see arguments for both the status quo and for such a change. The CEDAW mandate covers all forms of discrimination and therefore fits well with CSW and DAW work in New York. On the other hand, it might benefit from association with other human rights work, and contribute women's perspectives more strongly to such work, by being relocated to Geneva and the High Commissioner.

221. With regard to resources, several knowledgeable officials told the Inspector that CEDAW is "the best-kept secret in the United Nations" and praised the work that it has been able to accomplish. The Inspector believes that, as CEDAW expands its work as urged by the Draft Platform, it must have enhanced resources. She therefore suggested in the preceding section that an additional senior professional staff member, as a minimum, be added to help service CEDAW. Whether CEDAW keeps the current ties with DAW or moves to Geneva, additional servicing resources must be obtained.

222. On this issue, the Inspector was also disappointed to learn that, more than 18 months after the Vienna conference, there is still no funded and specific programme for women's advancement in the Centre for Human Rights. A February 1995 DAW report to the CSW details the directions that a joint work plan between the Centre and DAW can take, but also underscores the fact that Centre activity to date has only been ad hoc.[99] This report, however, is also significant because it clearly illustrates how the DAW can - and certainly should - take a more active role in the future in interacting with, and mainstreaming gender issues and perspectives in, the work of other major United Nations programmes.

223. In March 1995, the Commission on Human Rights called for intensified efforts at the international level to integrate the equal status of women and the human rights of women into the mainstream of United Nations system-wide activity, and for a meeting of chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies and working groups and others to consider how this integration can be achieved. It requested that a progress report on this issue be made to the Fourth World Conference.[100] The Inspector believes that these various policy statements all strongly underscore the need to establish, without further delay, a specific, funded, systematic programme within the Centre for Human Rights to deal with women and gender issues.

224. INSTRAW and UNIFEM: the proposals for the Draft (May) Platform for Action tentatively call on both INSTRAW and UNIFEM to review their work programmes in light of the Platform and develop guidelines for programmes for implementing those actions, and for the strengthening of both units.[101] In addition, there has been considerable discussion about melding these two bodies together and altering their locations (the Dominican Republic and New York, respectively), and also about UNIFEM's financing.[102]

225. The Inspector believes that INSTRAW should remain in its present location, since the vast majority of women, and the most pressing problems for women, are in the developing world. Therefore, at least one of the specific United Nations women's units

should be based there as well. She would also emphasize, however, as did the proposals in the Draft Platform, the need to recognize the special roles of UNIFEM and INSTRAW in the empowerment of women and tentatively to substantially increase the resources provided to them by governments.[103] The research and training functions carried out by INSTRAW and the catalytic work of UNIFEM are both critical elements of a strong United Nations system programme for women's advancement. In addition, the draft Platform stresses the need to strengthen UNIFEM's ability to undertake strategic interventions with a range of development partners inside and outside the System: the Inspector heard some very positive comments about successful past UNIFEM initiatives.

226. Regional commissions: The proposals for the Draft (May) Platform call for a very active role for United Nations regional commissions. They are to promote and assist national institutions in implementing the Platform, and regional plans of action, in close collaboration with the CSW. They should mainstream women's issues and gender perspectives in their activities, establish monitoring mechanisms, and collaborate with all types of other institutions in their regions. In light of all these tasks, the Draft Platform suggests that ECOSOC consider reviewing the institutional capacity of the commissions (including their women's units or focal points) to deal with gender issues and regional plans for action, and strengthening their capacities where appropriate.[104]

227. The Inspector agrees that the five United Nations regional commissions have a very important role to play in women's and gender programmes. She strongly endorses the need for a review and strengthening of their institutional capacities, since people involved in the regions indicated that many problems presently constrain the programmes. The commissions have had some success in developing plans of action and some networking relationships. However, at present there is a need for much stronger and more systematic advice from New York Headquarters on both the substantive and the personnel sides; stronger support from management and more active dialogue within the commissions on women's and work/family issues; more active recruitment outreach to women in the region; greater harmonization of longer-term global plans with regional work programmes at the formulative stage; and increased and more stable resources for the women's programmes. Also, in accord with the networking approach urged in other sections of this report, the regional commissions should consult regularly with each other to exchange experience and information on gender issues, improve women's status, and implement their regional action plans for the advancement of women.

5. Follow-up action on 1994 JIU report

228. The 1994 JIU report on the advancement of women's status in the United Nations Secretariat contained four recommendations in light of the emergence of an era of "human resources management" and "accountability". It called for:

(a) regular, comprehensive, results-oriented reporting on human resources management;

(b) strengthened human resources capacities in the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM);

(c) much more substantive and systematic follow-up and analysis in human resources reports; and

(d) ten steps to replace the existing, ineffective women's "action programme" with a much more effective programme.[105]

229. In discussions with OHRM officials in March 1995, the Inspector was pleased to learn of several actions taken or underway to implement the above recommendations. In the fall of 1994 the Secretary-General had already put forward proposals to "modernize and reenergize" Secretariat human resource management which move significantly toward the first JIU recommendation.[106] In addition, OHRM has taken steps to establish the urgently-needed human resources planning and analysis capabilities called for by part of the second recommendation above.

230. OHRM officials have also begun action on many of the ten steps identified in the fourth JIU recommendation. Most importantly:

(a) A consultant prepared analyses of future recruitment projections and new recruitment possibilities, which were made available at the March 1995 Conference on Women in the United Nations;

(b) OHRM reestablished a network of Focal Points for Women in units throughout the Secretariat: the Inspector believes that these people, some of whom have shown excellent initiative, can be very useful, if they are systematically and well-supported in their work both by OHRM and by the top managers of their units, in implementing the actions identified by the 1995 ACC policy statement on improving women's status in the System;

(c) the Secretary-General's reports on women's status to the General Assembly in November 1994 and to the CSW in February 1995 cited a strong commitment to establish a strategic plan of action to overcome obstacles to improving women's status, ending with the vigorous conclusion quoted at the beginning of this Chapter.[107]

231. Section IV of the November 1994 report discussed various elements and aspects of the proposed strategic plan, a "succession plan for women" being devised as its centre-piece, and intended actions to issue guidance and implement the plan. The General Assembly urged the Secretary-General in December 1994 to "implement fully" this strategic plan for the 1995-2000 period, and to include full implementation as a specific performance indicator in appraising the performance of all managers.[108] In March 1995 the CSW took note of the strategic plan proposal, urged the Secretary-General to implement it fully and with clear and specific instructions, and called for effective monitoring of implementation and for a progress report on activities taken to be submitted to the Committee at its next session.[109] The Inspector also hopes that the Secretariat will soon implement the new plan, in the systematic way urged for all System organizations in Chapter III and with solid monitoring and follow-up to ensure that this Secretariat effort does not join the failed action plans of the past.

232. The JIU's third recommendation dealt with the new "accountability" emphasis in United Nations programmes, and urged that this be implemented by much more substantive data, analysis, and reporting on human resources programmes in the future. The Inspector trusts that the admirable policy intentions of the Secretariat and OHRM will be followed up soon by concrete actions by OHRM, and evidenced in much more results-oriented human resources reporting in the future. For its part, JIU will continue to review Secretariat efforts to establish such accountability mechanisms and performance management, particularly as part of a review of management in the United Nations Secretariat which the JIU is conducting during 1995.

6. Interaction with NGOs

233. The introduction to this report cited the powerful new policy priorities given to social development and grassroots participatory processes by the General Assembly and recent world conferences, and the critical role that United Nations system programmes can play in this area. As noted there and throughout this report, there is perhaps no specific area where NGOs are so active and involved at all levels worldwide as in programmes for the advancement of women.

234. The proposals for the Draft (May) Platform for Action cite the important NGO role in several places. They urge that implementation of the Platform at all levels and by all institutions (both public and private, and including networks and organizations devoted to the advancement of women) emphasize transparency, increased linkages, a consistent flow of information, and clear objectives and accountability. The Draft Platform proposals observe that NGOs and grass-roots organizations have a specific role in creating a climate based on equality between men and women. They further state that the active support of NGOs and other institutional actors should be encouraged, and that NGOs should also be encouraged to contribute to the design and implementation of strategies or plans of action for implementing the Platform, and to mobilize and allocate resources for Platform implementation as well.[110]

235. The 1993 JIU report on United Nations system work with NGOs at the national and grassroots levels noted the many types of interaction and cooperation which are developing worldwide between System organizations and NGOs in operational programmes, and the benefits that this collaboration can provide for more successful operational activities for development. It also noted that while many System agencies and organizations have expanded their collaborative work with NGOs in recent years, the organization which has the most wide-ranging areas of interaction with NGOs - the United Nations - had not yet inventoried and organized its collective work. Much has been said about administrative procedures for NGO involvement with intergovernmental bodies and conferences, but there has been no comparable analysis of operational collaboration.[111]

236. During 1988, as requested by the General Assembly, the Secretary-General began a study of such relationships. The Management Advisory Service (now defunct) made an extensive analysis of NGO relationships in programmes at various duty stations, and explored arrangements for more systematic collaboration and a database system to identify NGO partners. However, this study was never completed. The 1993 JIU report on NGOs recommended that it be updated and completed, and that the Secretary-General then establish an overall structure and leadership policies for Secretariat operational work with NGOs.[112] Unfortunately, the ACC comments on the JIU report, while otherwise supportive and positive, omitted any comment on this recommendation.[113]

237. The Inspector learned that nothing further has been done in the Secretariat on the earlier study. An extensive report of the Secretary-General in 1994 discussed NGOs at length, but focused on consultation arrangements.[114] Changes in procedures continue under active discussion, and tensions exist with regard to the representation of some NGOs at the Fourth World Conference, as they have at other recent world conferences. These discussions, while struggling with political issues, are still essentially administrative.

238. The "organizational culture" of the United Nations Secretariat and the unresolved issue of operational collaboration with NGOs make it very difficult for the United Nations to properly carry out both the spirit and the letter of the Platform for Action. Administrative and procedural issues of NGO representation must of course be dealt with, but they should not crowd out the equally or even more important questions of operational collaboration as they now do. NGOs represent the very strong emergence of "non-state" organizations as significant participants in international policy formulation and in the implementation of operational activities worldwide. NGOs are now the second largest vehicle for development and humanitarian assistance, transferring some $8 billion dollars of financial flows in 1992, ahead of the United Nations system totals. NGOs participate in half the World Bank's projects, are increasingly used as implementing partners by major bilateral donors, and are increasingly involved as important implementing partners with United Nations funds and programmes in humanitarian, emergency, and, to a lesser extent, development activities.

239. It is difficult to see how the United Nations can conduct a dynamic future worldwide programme for women's advancement without seriously analyzing, clarifying, and enhancing its many potential operational relationships with NGOs. The Secretary-General has made strong statements about recognizing NGOs as full participants in international life, and the need to "work together" is increasingly acknowledged globally and within the Secretariat and the System. But this intention needs urgently to be put into practice if the United Nations is going to truly and effectively support participative social development programmes for women and other major groups.

240. The Inspector therefore repeats the 1993 JIU recommendation that the Secretary-General update the uncompleted 1988 management review of NGO involvement in Secretariat operational programmes, and then formulate an overall policy and framework for the many United Nations programmes which work with NGOs. She hopes that this time a response will be forthcoming. The issue is too important to successful implementation of future women's and other programmes to be neglected any longer.

7. Governing body support and leadership

241. The proposals for the Draft (May) Platform for Action state that the General Assembly, as the principal policy-making and appraisal organ for follow-up to the Fourth World Conference, should integrate gender issues throughout its work. It should appraise progress in implementing the Platform, first at its fiftieth session in 1995 by considering the Report on the Conference and one by the Secretary-General on follow-up, and subsequently through its continuing work on the advancement of women, and through reviews of implementation of the Platform in 1996, 1998, and the year 2000.

242. The Draft Platform proposals cite the responsibility of ECOSOC to oversee system-side coordination of implementation of the Platform. ECOSOC should also be invited to review the mandate of the CSW, and should incorporate gender issues into its discussion of all policy questions. Before the year 2000, ECOSOC should consider devoting at least one high-level segment to the advancement of women and implementation of the Platform, one coordination segment to the advancement of women, and one operational activities segment to development activities related to gender, with a view to instituting guidelines and procedures for implementation.[115]

243. This planned schedule would place the General Assembly and ECOSOC in an excellent position to carefully and forcefully oversee implementation of all the management and policy action issues identified in this report. The Inspector believes that these management issues, which in the past have been treated only in a very general way, are an important explanation for past disappointing progress. Just as the preceding two chapters included a subsection stressing the critical role of governing bodies in acting to strengthen programmes for women's advancement and improve their status, the Inspector concludes this Chapter with the observation that the leadership, support and participation of the CSW, ECOSOC and the General Assembly will be absolutely essential to improve these programmes in the future. Firm attention to programme follow-up and results can now help the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the CSW to finally achieve the policy objectives for worldwide women's advancement and improvement of women's status which they have stated so well and for so long.

ANNEX I

MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM ENGAGED IN PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN'S ADVANCEMENT

1. The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), established in 1946, is one of the twelve functional commissions reporting to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Its membership has been gradually enlarged from 15 to 45 members, and it meets annually (at least until the year 2000) in New York. The CSW is the central intergovernmental body of the United Nations which develops policy and monitors the implementation of its recommendations with regard to the advancement of women in all Member States of the United Nations. It has also served as the preparatory body for the 1980, 1985, and 1995 world conferences on women.

2. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was established in 1982 to consider progress made in the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979. Its 23 expert members meet annually to consider national reports on the measures taken to comply with the treaty's obligations. As a treaty body, it functions relatively independently, but does report annually to the General Assembly and is serviced by the DAW.

3. The Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) was established as a section in the United Nations Secretariat in 1946, became a Division in 1988, and moved from Vienna to New York in 1993. It serves as the substantive secretariat for the CSW and CEDAW and as a focal point for matters on women, and prepares the documentation and various reports to support the work and decision-making processes of the inter-governmental machinery.

4. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research for Women (INSTRAW) was established in 1976 to conduct research to make women more visible, and to develop training material to facilitate the inclusion of women in the development process of their countries. It is a fully autonomous part of the United Nations system, and is funded by voluntary contributions.

5. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) was created in 1984 to serve as a catalyst to ensure appropriate involvement of women in mainstreaming development activities and to support innovative and experimental activities benefitting women in line with national and regional priorities. UNIFEM is a semi-autonomous agency within the United Nations Development Programme. It is financed from voluntary contributions amounting to about $10-12 million a year.

6. The specialized agencies and various entities of the United Nations each maintain a focal point on women, and often a unit or programme, to ensure that women's concerns are integrated into their specific mandates, and to conduct varying programmes for women's advancement. Most of them are also participants in the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Women. Established in 1976, this group meets in conjunction with the annual meetings of the CSW and with the support of the DAW.

ANNEX II

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efforts of UNDP, ILO and the World Bank to mainstream gender (OP4);
industrialization, trade and female employment in developing countries (OP5);
gender and the economics of family size (OP6);
bilateral assistance efforts to mainstream women (OP7);
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